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'GOD REST YE, MERRY GENTLEMEN.'

LITTLE NELL, sometimes called the Blessed Damosel, was a war correspondent for the *New York Eclipse*, and at sea on the despatch boats he wore pyjamas, and on shore he wore whatever fate allowed him, which clothing was in the main unsuitable to the climate. He had been cruising in the Caribbean on a small tug, awash always, habitable never, wildly looking for Cervera's fleet; although what he was going to do with four armoured cruisers and two destroyers in the event of his really finding them had not been explained by the managing editor. The cable instructions read: 'Take tug; go find Cervera's fleet.' If his unfortunate nine-knot craft should happen to find these great twenty-knot ships, with their two spiteful and faster attendants, Little Nell had wondered how he was going to lose them again. He had marvelled, both publicly and in secret, on the uncompromising asininity of managing editors at odd moments, but he had wasted little time. The *Jefferson G. Johnson* was already coaled, so he passed the word to his skipper, bought some tinned meats, cigars, and beer, and soon the *Johnson* sailed on her mission, tooting her whistle in graceful farewell to some friends of hers in the bay.

So the *Johnson* crawled giddily to one wave-height after another, and fell, aslant, into one valley after another for a longer period than was good for the hearts of the men, because the *Johnson* was merely a harbour-tug, with no architectural intention of parading the high seas, and the crew had never seen the decks all white water like a mere sunken reef. As for the cook, he

blasphemed hopelessly hour in and hour out, meanwhile pursuing the equipment of his trade frantically from side to side of the galley. Little Nell dealt with a great deal of grumbling, but he knew it was not the real evil grumbling. It was merely the unhappy words of men who wished expression of comradeship for their wet, forlorn, half-starved lives, to which, they explained, they were not accustomed, and for which, they explained, they were not properly paid. Little Nell consoled and consoled without difficulty. He laid words of gentle sympathy before them, and smothered his own misery behind the face of a reporter of the *New York Eclipse*. But they tossed themselves in their cockleshell even as far as Martinique; they knew many races and many flags, but they did not find Cervera's fleet. If they had found that elusive squadron, this timid story would never have been written; there would probably have been a lyric. The *Johnson* limped one morning into the Mole St. Nicholas, and there Little Nell received this despatch: 'Can't understand your inaction. What are you doing with the boat? Report immediately. Fleet transports already left Tampa. Expected destination near Santiago. Proceed there immediately. Place yourself under orders.—Rogers. *Eclipse*.'

One day, steaming along the high luminous blue coast of Santiago province, they fetched into view the fleets, a knot of masts and funnels, looking incredibly inshore, as if they were glued to the mountains. Then mast left mast, and funnel left funnel, slowly, slowly, and the shore remained still, but the fleets seemed to move out toward the eager *Johnson*. At the speed of nine knots an hour the scene separated into its parts. On an easily rolling sea, under a crystal sky, black-hulled transports—erstwhile packets—lay waiting, while grey cruisers and gunboats lay near shore, shelling the beach and some woods. From their grey sides came thin red flashes, belches of white smoke, and then over the waters sounded boom—boom—boom—boom. The crew of the *Jefferson G. Johnson* forgave Little Nell all the suffering of a previous fortnight.

To the westward, about the mouth of Santiago harbour, sat a row of castellated grey battleships, their eyes turned another way, waiting.

The *Johnson* swung past a transport whose decks and rigging were aswarm with black figures, as if a tribe of bees had alighted upon a log. She swung past a cruiser indignant at being left

out of the game, her deck thick with white-clothed tars watching the play of their luckier brethren. The cold blue lifting seas tilted the big ships easily, slowly, and heaved the little ones in the usual sinful way, as if very little babes had surreptitiously mounted sixteen-hand trotting hunters. The *Johnson* leered and tumbled her way through a community of ships. The bombardment ceased, and some of the troopships edged in near the land. Soon boats black with men and towed by launches were almost lost to view in the scintillant mystery of light which appeared where the sea met the land. A disembarkation had begun. The *Johnson* sped on at her nine knots, and Little Nell chafed exceedingly, gloating upon the shore through his glasses, anon glancing irritably over the side to note the efforts of the excited tug. Then at last they were in a sort of a cove, with troopships, newspaper boats, and cruisers on all sides of them, and over the water came a great hum of human voices, punctuated frequently by the clang of engine-room gongs as the steamers manœuvred to avoid jostling.

In reality it was the great moment—the moment for which men, ships, islands, and continents had been waiting for months; but somehow it did not look it. It was very calm; a certain strip of high green rocky shore was being rapidly populated from boat after boat; that was all. Like many preconceived moments, it refused to be supreme.

But nothing lessened Little Nell's frenzy. He knew that the army was landing—he could see it; and little did he care if the great moment did not look its part—it was his virtue as a correspondent to recognise the great moment in any disguise. The *Johnson* lowered a boat for him, and he dropped into it swiftly, forgetting everything. However, the mate, a bearded philanthropist, flung after him a mackintosh and a bottle of whisky. Little Nell's face was turned toward those other boats filled with men, all eyes upon the placid, gentle, noiseless shore. Little Nell saw many soldiers seated stiffly beside upright rifle barrels, their blue breasts crossed with white shelter tent and blanket-rolls. Launches screeched; jack-tars pushed or pulled with their boathooks; a beach was alive with working soldiers, some of them stark naked. Little Nell's boat touched the shore amid a babble of tongues, dominated at that time by a single stern voice, which was repeating, 'Fall in, B Company!'

He took his mackintosh and his bottle of whisky and invaded

Cuba. It was a trifle bewildering. Companies of those same men in blue and brown were being rapidly formed and marched off across a little open space—near a pool—near some palm trees—near a house—into the hills. At one side, a mulatto in dirty linen and an old straw hat was hospitably using a machete to cut open some green cocoanuts for a group of idle invaders. At the other side, up a bank, a block-house was burning furiously; while near it some railway sheds were smouldering, with a little Rogers' engine standing amid the ruins, grey, almost white, with ashes until it resembled a ghost. Little Nell dodged the encrimsoned block-house, and proceeded where he saw a little village street lined with flimsy wooden cottages. Some ragged Cuban cavalymen were tranquilly tending their horses in a shed which had not yet grown cold of the Spanish occupation. Three American soldiers were trying to explain to a Cuban that they wished to buy drinks. A native rode by, clubbing his pony, as always. The sky was blue; the sea talked with a gravelly accent at the feet of some rocks; upon its bosom the ships sat quiet as gulls. There was no mention, directly, of invasion—invasion for war—save in the roar of the flames at the block-house; but none even heeded this conflagration, excepting to note that it threw out a great heat. It was warm, very warm. It was really hard for little Nell to keep from thinking of his own affairs: his debts, other misfortunes, loves, prospects of happiness. Nobody was in a flurry; the Cubans were not tearfully grateful; the American troops were visibly glad of being released from those ill transports, and the men often asked, with interest, 'Where's the Spaniards?' And yet it must have been a great moment! It was a *great* moment!

It seemed made to prove that the emphatic time of history is not the emphatic time of the common man, who throughout the change of nations feels an itch on his shin, a pain in his head, hunger, thirst, a lack of sleep; the influence of his memory of past firesides, glasses of beer, girls, theatres, ideals, religions, parents, faces, hurts, joy.

Little Nell was hailed from a comfortable verandah, and, looking up, saw Walkley of the *Eclipse*, stretched in a yellow and green hammock, smoking his pipe with an air of having always lived in that house, in that village. 'Oh, dear little Nell, how glad I am to see your angel face again! There! don't try to hide it; I can see it. Did you bring a corkscrew too? You're super-



seded as master of the slaves. Did you know it? And by Rogers, too! Rogers is a Sadducee, a cadaver and a pelican, appointed to the post of chief correspondent, no doubt, because of his rare gift of incapacity. Never mind.'

'Where is he now?' asked Little Nell, taking seat on the steps.

'He is down interfering with the landing of the troops,' answered Walkley, swinging a leg. 'I hope you have the *Johnson* well stocked with food as well as with cigars, cigarettes and tobaccos, ales, wines and liquors. We shall need them. There is already famine in the house of Walkley. I have discovered that the system of transportation for our gallant soldiery does not strike in me the admiration which I have often felt when viewing the management of an ordinary bun-shop. A hunger, stifling, jammed together amid odours, and everybody irritable—ye gods, how irritable! And so I—— Look! look!'

The *Jefferson G. Johnson*, well known to them at an incredible distance, could be seen striding the broad sea, the smoke belching from her funnel, headed for Jamaica. 'The Army Lands in Cuba!' shrieked Walkley. 'Shafter's Army Lands near Santiago! Special type! Half the front page! Oh, the Sadducee! The cadaver! The pelican!'

Little Nell was dumb with astonishment and fear. Walkley, however, was at least not dumb. 'That's the pelican! That's Mr. Rogers making his first impression upon the situation. He has engraved himself upon us. We are tattooed with him. There will be a fight to-morrow, sure, and we will cover it even as you found Cervera's fleet. No food, no horses, no money. I am transport-lame; you are sea-weak. We will never see our salaries again. Whereby Rogers is a fool.'

'Anybody else here?' asked Little Nell wearily.

'Only young Point.' Point was an artist on the *Eclipse*. 'But he has nothing. Pity there wasn't an almshouse in this God-forsaken country. Here comes Point now.' A sad-faced man came along carrying much luggage. 'Hello, Point! lithographer and genius, have you food? Food. Well, then, you had better return yourself to Tampa by wire. You are no good here. Only one more little mouth to feed.'

Point seated himself near Little Nell. 'I haven't had anything to eat since daybreak,' he said gloomily, 'and I don't care much, for I am simply dog-tired!'

'Don't tell me you are dog-tired, my talented friend,' cried

Walkley from his hammock. 'Think of me. And now what's to be done?'

They stared for a time disconsolately at where, over the rim of the sea, trailed black smoke from the *Johnson*. From the landing-place below and to the right came the howls of a man who was superintending the disembarkation of some mules. The burning block-house still rendered its hollow roar. Suddenly the men-crowded landing set up its cheer, and the steamers all whistled long and raucously. Tiny black figures were raising an American flag over a block-house on the top of a great hill.

'That's mighty fine Sunday stuff,' said Little Nell. 'Well, I'll go and get the order in which the regiments landed, and who was first ashore, and all that. Then I'll go and try to find General Lawton's headquarters. His division has got the advance, I think.'

'And, lo! I will write a burning description of the raising of the flag,' said Walkley. 'While the brilliant Point buskies for food—and makes damn sure he gets it,' he added fiercely.

Little Nell thereupon wandered over the face of the earth, threading out the story of the landing of the regiments. He only found about fifty men who had been the first American soldiers to set foot on Cuba, and of these he took the most probable. The army was going forward in detail, as soon as the pieces were landed. There was a house something like a crude country tavern—the soldiers in it were looking over their rifles and talking. There was a well of water quite hot—more palm trees—an inscrutable background.

When he arrived again at Walkley's mansion he found the verandah crowded with correspondents in khaki, duck, dungaree, and flannel. They wore riding-breeches, but that was mainly forethought. They could see now that fate intended them to walk. Some were writing copy, while Walkley discoursed from his hammock. Rhodes—doomed to be shot in action some days later—was trying to borrow a canteen from men who had one, and from men who had none. Young Point, wan, utterly worn out, was asleep on the floor. Walkley pointed to him. 'That is how he appears after his foraging journey, during which he ran all Cuba through a sieve. Oh, yes; a can of corn and a half-bottle of lime juice.'

'Say, does anybody know the name of the commander of the 26th Infantry?'

'Who commands the first brigade of Kent's Division?'

'What was the name of the chap that raised the flag?'

'What time is it?'

And a woeful man was wandering here and there with a cold pipe, saying plaintively, 'Who's got a match? Anybody here got a match?'

Little Nell's left boot hurt him at the heel, and so he removed it, taking great care and whistling through his teeth. The heated dust was upon them all, making everybody feel that bathing was unknown and shattering their tempers. Young Point developed a snore which brought grim sarcasm from all quarters. Always, below, hummed the traffic of the landing-place.

When night came Little Nell thought best not to go to bed until late, because he recognised the mackintosh as but a feeble comfort. The evening was a glory. A breeze came from the sea, fanning spurts of flame out of the ashes and charred remains of the sheds, while overhead lay a splendid summer-night sky, aflash with great tranquil stars. In the streets of the village were two or three fires, frequently and suddenly reddening with their glare the figures of low-voiced men who moved here and there. The lights of the transports blinked on the murmuring plain in front of the village; and far to the westward Little Nell could sometimes note a subtle indication of a playing search-light, which alone marked the presence of the invisible battleships, half-mooned about the entrance of Santiago Harbour, waiting—waiting—waiting.

When Little Nell returned to the verandah he stumbled along a man-strewn place, until he came to the spot where he left his mackintosh; but he found it gone. His curses mingled then with those of the men upon whose bodies he had trodden. Two English correspondents, lying awake to smoke a last pipe, half rose and looked at him lazily. 'What's wrong, old chap?' murmured one. 'Eh? Lost it, eh? Well, look here; come here and take a bit of my blanket. It's a jolly big one. Oh, no trouble at all, man. There you are. Got enough? Comfy? Good-night.'

A sleepy voice arose in the darkness. 'If this hammock breaks, I shall hit at least ten of those Indians down there. Never mind. This is war.'

The men slept. Once the sound of three or four shots rang across the windy night, and one head uprose swiftly from the

verandah, two eyes looked dazedly at nothing, and the head as swiftly sank. Again a sleepy voice was heard. 'Usual thing! Nervous sentries!' The men slept. Before dawn a pulseless, penetrating chill came into the air, and the correspondents awakened, shivering, into a blue world. Some of the fires still smouldered. Walkley and Little Nell kicked vigorously into Point's framework. 'Come on, brilliance! Wake up, talent! Don't be sodgering. It's too cold to sleep, but it's not too cold to hustle.' Point sat up dolefully. Upon his face was a childish expression. 'Where are we going to get breakfast?' he asked, sulking.

'There's no breakfast for you, you hound! Get up and hustle.' Accordingly they hustled. With exceeding difficulty they learned that nothing emotional had happened during the night, save the killing of two Cubans who were so secure in ignorance that they could not understand the challenge of two American sentries. Then Walkley ran a gamut of commanding officers, and Little Nell pumped privates for their impressions of Cuba. When his indignation at the absence of breakfast allowed him, Point made sketches. At the full break of day the *Adolphus*, an *Eclipse* despatch boat, sent a boat ashore with Tailor and Shackles in it, and Walkley departed tearlessly for Jamaica, soon after he had bestowed upon his friends much tinned goods and blankets.

'Well, we've got our stuff off,' said Little Nell. 'Now Point and I must breakfast.'

Shackles, for some reason, carried a great hunting-knife, and with it Little Nell opened a tin of beans.

'Fall to,' he said amiably to Point.

There were some hard biscuits. Afterwards they—the four of them—marched off on the route of the troops. They were well loaded with luggage, particularly young Point, who had somehow made a great gathering of unnecessary things. Hills covered with verdure soon enclosed them. They heard that the army had advanced some nine miles with no fighting. Evidences of the rapid advance were here and there—coats, gauntlets, blanket-rolls on the ground. Mule-trains came herding back, along the narrow trail to the sound of a little tinkling bell. Cubans were appropriating the coats and blanket-rolls.

The four correspondents hurried onward. The surety of impending battle weighed upon them always, but there was a

score of minor things more intimate. Little Nell's left heel had chafed until it must have been quite raw, and every moment he wished to take seat by the roadside and console himself from pain. Shackles and Point disliked each other extremely, and often they foolishly quarrelled over something, or nothing. The blanket-rolls and packages for the hand oppressed everybody. It was like being burned out of a boarding-house, and having to carry one's trunk eight miles to the nearest neighbour. Moreover, Point, since he had stupidly overloaded, with great wisdom placed various cameras and other trifles in the hands of his three less-burdened and more sensible friends. This made them fume and gnash, but in complete silence, since he was hideously youthful and innocent and unaware. They all wished to rebel, but none of them saw their way clear, because—they did not understand—but somehow it seemed a barbarous project—no one wanted to say anything—cursed him privately for a little ass, but—said nothing. For instance, Little Nell wished to remark, 'Point, you are not a thoroughbred in a half of a way. You are an inconsiderate, thoughtless little swine.' But, in truth, he said, 'Point, when you started out you looked like a Christmas-tree. If we keep on robbing you of your bundles there soon won't be anything left for the children.' Point asked dubiously, 'What do you mean?' Little Nell merely laughed with deceptive good-nature.

They were always very thirsty. There was always a bowl for the half-bottle of lime juice. Five or six drops from it were simply heavenly in the warm water from the canteens. Point seemed to try to keep the lime juice in his possession, in order that he might get more benefit of it. Before the war was ended the others found themselves declaring vehemently that they loathed Point, and yet when men asked them the reason they grew quite inarticulate. The reasons seemed then so small, so childish, as the reasons of a lot of women. And yet at the time his offences loomed enormous.

The surety of impending battle still weighed upon them. Then it came that Shackles turned seriously ill. Suddenly he dropped his own and much of Point's traps upon the trail, wriggled out of his blanket-roll, flung it away, and took seat heavily at the roadside. They saw with surprise that his face was pale as death, and yet streaming with sweat.

'Boys,' he said in his ordinary voice, 'I'm clean played out.'

I can't go another step. You fellows go on, and leave me to come as soon as I am able.'

'Oh, no, that wouldn't do at all,' said Little Nell and Tailor together.

Point moved over to a soft place, and dropped amid whatever traps he was himself carrying.

'Don't know whether it's ancestral or merely from the—sun—but I've got a stroke,' said Shackles, and gently slumped over to a prostrate position before either Little Nell or Tailor could reach him.

Thereafter Shackles was parental; it was Little Nell and Tailor who were really suffering from a stroke, either ancestral or from the sun.

'Put my blanket-roll under my head, Nell, me son,' he said gently. 'There now! That is very nice. It is delicious. Why, I'm all right, only—only tired.' He closed his eyes, and something like an easy slumber came over him. Once he opened his eyes. 'Don't trouble about me,' he remarked.

But the two fussed about him, nervous, worried, discussing this plan and that plan. It was Point who first made a business-like statement. Seated carelessly and indifferently upon his soft place, he finally blurted out:

'Say! Look here! Some of us have got to go on. We can't all stay here. Some of us have got to go on.'

It was quite true; the *Eclipse* could take no account of strokes. In the end Point and Tailor went on, leaving Little Nell to bring on Shackles as soon as possible. The latter two spent many hours in the grass by the roadside. They made numerous abrupt acquaintances with passing staff officers, privates, muleteers, many stopping to inquire the wherefore of the death-faced figure on the ground. Favours were done often and often, by peer and peasant—small things, of no consequence, and yet warming.

It was dark when Shackles and Little Nell had come slowly to where they could hear the murmur of the army's bivouac.

'Shack,' gasped Little Nell to the man leaning forlornly upon him, 'I guess we'd better bunk down here where we stand.'

'All right, old boy. Anything you say,' replied Shackles, in the bass and hollow voice which arrives with such condition.

They crawled into some bushes, and distributed their belongings upon the ground. Little Nell spread out the blankets, and

generally played housemaid. Then they lay down, supperless, being too weary to eat. The men slept.

At dawn Little Nell awakened and looked wildly for Shackles, whose empty blanket was pressed flat like a wet newspaper on the ground. But at nearly the same moment Shackles appeared, elate.

'Come on,' he cried; 'I've rustled an invitation for breakfast.'

Little Nell came on with celerity.

'Where? Who?' he said.

'Oh! some officers,' replied Shackles airily. If he had been ill the previous day, he showed it now only in some curious kind of deference he paid to Little Nell.

Shackles conducted his comrade, and soon they arrived at where a captain and his one subaltern arose courteously from where they were squatting near a fire of little sticks. They wore the wide white trouser-stripes of infantry officers, and upon the shoulders of their blue campaign shirts were the little marks of their rank; but otherwise there was little beyond their manners to render them different from the men who were busy with breakfast near them.

The breakfast was of canned tomatoes stewed with hard bread, more hard bread, and coffee. It was very good fare, almost royal. Shackles and Little Nell were absurdly grateful as they felt the hot bitter coffee tingle in them. But they departed joyfully before the sun was fairly up, and passed into Siboney.

The beach at Siboney was furious with traffic, even as had been the beach at Daqueri. Launches shouted, jack-tars prodded with their boathooks, and load of men followed load of men. Straight, parade-like, on the shore stood a trumpeter playing familiar calls to the troop-horses who swam towards him eagerly through the salt seas. Crowding closely into the cove were transports of all sizes and ages. To the left and to the right of the little landing-beach green hills shot upward like the wings in a theatre. They were scarred here and there with block-houses and rifle-pits. Up one hill a regiment was crawling, seemingly inch by inch. Shackles and Little Nell walked among palms and scrubby bushes, near pools, over spaces of sand holding little monuments of biscuit-boxes, ammunition-boxes, and supplies of all kinds. Some regiment was just collecting itself from the ships, and the men made great patches of blue on the brown sand.

Shackles asked a question of a man accidentally: 'Where's



that regiment going to?' He pointed to the force that was crawling up the hill. The man grinned, and said, 'They're going to look for a fight!'

'Looking for a fight!' said Shackles and Little Nell together. They stared into each other's eyes. Then they set off for the foot of the hill. The hill was long and toilsome. Below them spread wider and wider a vista of ships quiet on a grey sea; a busy, black disembarkation-place; tall, still, green hills; a village of well-separated cottages; palms; a bit of road; soldiers marching. They passed vacant Spanish trenches; little twelve-foot block-houses. Soon they were on a fine upland near the sea. The path, under ordinary conditions, must have been a beautiful wooded way. It wound in the shade of thickets of fine trees, then through rank growths of bushes with revealed and fantastic roots, then through a grassy space which had all the beauty of a neglected orchard. But always from under their feet scuttled noisy land-crabs, demons to the nerves, which in some way possessed a semblance of moon-like faces upon their blue or red bodies, and these faces were turned with expressions of deepest horror upon Shackles and Little Nell as they sped to overtake the pugnacious regiment. The route was paved with coats, hats, tent and blanket rolls, ration-tins, haversacks—everything but ammunition belts, rifles and canteens.

They heard a dull noise of voices in front of them—men talking too loud for the etiquette of the forest—and presently they came upon two or three soldiers lying by the roadside, flame-faced, utterly spent from the hurried march in the heat. One man came limping back along the path. He looked to them anxiously for sympathy and comprehension. 'Hurt m' knee. I swear I couldn't keep up with th' boys. I had to leave 'm. Wasn't that tough luck?' His collar rolled away from a red muscular neck, and his bare forearms were better than stanchions. Yet he was almost babyishly tearful in his attempt to make the two correspondents feel that he had not turned back because he was afraid. They gave him scant courtesy, tinted with one drop of sympathetic yet cynical understanding. Soon they overtook the hospital squad; men addressing chaste language to some pack-mules; a talkative sergeant; two amiable, cool-eyed young surgeons. Soon they were amid the rear troops of the dismounted volunteer cavalry regiment which was moving to attack. The men strode easily along, arguing one to another on ulterior matters. If they were going into battle, they either did

not know it or they concealed it well. They were more like men going into a bar at one o'clock in the morning. Their laughter rang through the Cuban woods. And in the meantime, soft, mellow, sweet, sang the voice of the Cuban wood-dove, the Spanish guerilla calling to his mate—forest music; on the flanks, deep back on both flanks, the adorable wood-dove, singing only of love. Some of the advancing Americans said it was beautiful. It *was* beautiful. The Spanish guerilla calling to his mate. What could be more beautiful?

Shackles and Little Nell rushed precariously through waist-high bushes until they reached the centre of the single-filed regiment. The firing then broke out in front. All the woods set up a hot sputtering; the bullets sped along the path and across it from both sides. The thickets presented nothing but dense masses of light green foliage, out of which these swift steel things were born supernaturally.

It was a volunteer regiment going into its first action, against an enemy of unknown force, in a country where the vegetation was thicker than fur on a cat. There might have been a dreadful mess; but in military matters the only way to deal with a situation of this kind is to take it frankly by the throat and squeeze it to death. Shackles and Little Nell felt the thrill of the orders. 'Come ahead, men! Keep right ahead, men! Come on!' The volunteer cavalry regiment, with all the willingness in the world, went ahead into the angle of a V-shaped Spanish formation.

It seemed that every leaf had turned into a soda-bottle and was popping its cork. Some of the explosions seemed to be against the men's very faces, others against the backs of their necks. 'Now, men! Keep goin' ahead. Keep on goin'.' The forward troops were already engaged. They, at least, had something at which to shoot. 'Now, captain, if you're ready.' 'Stop that swearing there.' 'Got a match?' 'Steady, now, men.'

A gate appeared in a barbed-wire fence. Within were billowy fields of long grass, dotted with palms and luxuriant mango trees. It was Elysian—a place for lovers, fair as Eden in its radiance of sun, under its blue sky. One might have expected to see white-robed figures walking slowly in the shadows. A dead man, with a bloody face, lay twisted in a curious contortion at the waist. Some one was shot in the leg, his pins knocked cleanly from under him.

'Keep goin', men.' The air roared, and the ground fled reelingly under their feet. Light, shadow, trees, grass. Bullets

spat from every side. Once they were in a thicket, and the men, blanched and bewildered, turned one way, and then another, not knowing which way to turn. 'Keep goin', men.' Soon they were in the sunlight again. They could see the long scant line, which was being drained man by man—one might say drop by drop. The musketry rolled forth in great full measure from the magazine carbines. 'Keep. goin', men.' 'Christ, I'm shot!' 'They're flankin' us, sir.' 'We're bein' fired into by our own crowd, sir.' 'Keep goin', men.' A low ridge before them was a bottling establishment blowing up in detail. From the right—it seemed at that time to be the far right—they could hear steady, crashing volleys—the United States regulars in action.

Then suddenly—to use a phrase of the street—the whole bottom of the thing fell out. It was suddenly and mysteriously ended. The Spaniards had run away, and some of the regulars were chasing them. It was a victory.

When the wounded men dropped in the tall grass they quite disappeared, as if they had sunk in water. Little Nell and Shackles were walking along through the fields, disputing.

'Well, damn it, man!' cried Shackles, 'we *must* get a list of the killed and wounded.'

'That is not nearly so important,' quoth Little Nell, academically, 'as to get the first account to New York of the first action of the army in Cuba.'

They came upon Tailor, lying with a bared torso and a small red hole through his left lung. He was calm, but evidently out of temper. 'Good God, Tailor!' they cried, dropping to their knees like two pagans; 'are you hurt, old boy?'

'Hurt?' he said gently. 'No, 'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church-door, but 'tis enough, d' you see? You understand, do you? Idiots!'

Then he became very official. 'Shackles, feel and see what's under my leg. It's a small stone, or a burr, or something. Don't be clumsy now! Be careful! Be careful!' Then he said, angrily, 'Oh, you didn't find it at all. Damn it!'

In reality there was nothing there, and so Shackles could not have removed it. 'Sorry, old boy,' he said, meekly.

'Well, you may observe that I can't stay here more than a year,' said Tailor, with some oratory, 'and the hospital people have their own work in hand. It behoves you, Nell, to fly to Siboney, arrest a despatch boat, get a cot and some other things, and some minions to carry me. If I get once down to the base

I'm all right, but if I stay here I'm dead. Meantime Shackles can stay here and try to look as if he liked it.'

There was no disobeying the man. Lying there with a little red hole in his left lung, he dominated them through his helplessness, and through their fear that if they angered him he would move and—bleed.

'Well?' said Little Nell.

'Yes,' said Shackles, nodding.

Little Nell departed.

'That blanket you lent me,' Tailor called after him, 'is back there somewhere with Point.'

Little Nell noted that many of the men who were wandering among the wounded seemed so spent with the toil and excitement of their first action that they could hardly drag one leg after the other. He found himself suddenly in the same condition. His face, his neck, even his mouth, felt dry as sun-baked bricks, and his legs were foreign to him. But he swung desperately into his five-mile task. On the way he passed many things: bleeding men carried by comrades; others making their way grimly, with encrimsoned arms; then the little settlement of the hospital squad; men on the ground everywhere, many in the path; one young captain dying, with great gasps, his body pale blue, and glistening, like the inside of a rabbit's skin. But the voice of the Cuban wood-dove, soft, mellow, sweet, singing only of love, was no longer heard from the wealth of foliage.

Presently the hurrying correspondent met another regiment coming to assist—a line of a thousand men in single file through the jungle. 'Well, how is it going, old man?' 'How is it coming on?' 'Are we doin' 'em?' Then, after an interval, came other regiments, moving out. He had to take to the bush to let these long lines pass him, and he was delayed, and had to flounder amid brambles. But at last, like a successful pilgrim, he arrived at the brow of the great hill overlooking Siboney. His practised eye scanned the fine broad brow of the sea with its clustering ships, but he saw thereon no *Eclipse* despatch boats. He zigzagged heavily down the hill, and arrived finally amid the dust and outcries of the base. He seemed to ask a thousand men if they had seen an *Eclipse* boat on the water, or an *Eclipse* correspondent on the shore. They all answered, 'No.'

He was like a poverty-stricken and unknown suppliant at a foreign Court. Even his plea got only ill-hearings. He had expected the news of the serious wounding of Tailor to appal the

other correspondents, but they took it quite calmly. It was as if their sense of an impending great battle between two large armies had quite got them out of focus for these minor tragedies. Tailor was hurt—yes? They looked at Little Nell, dazed. How curious that Tailor should be almost the first—how *very* curious—yes! But, as far as arousing them to any enthusiasm of active pity, it seemed impossible. He was lying up there in the grass, was he? Too bad, too bad, too bad!

Little Nell went alone and lay down in the sand with his back against a rock. Tailor was prostrate up there in the grass. Never mind. Nothing was to be done. The whole situation was too colossal. Then into his zone came Walkley the invincible.

'Walkley!' yelled Little Nell. Walkley came quickly, and Little Nell lay weakly against his rock and talked. In thirty seconds Walkley understood everything, had hurled a drink of whisky into Little Nell, had admonished him to lie quiet, and had gone to organise and manipulate. When he returned he was a trifle dubious and backward. Behind him was a singular squad of volunteers from the *Adolphus*, carrying among them a wire-woven bed.

'Look here, Nell!' said Walkley, in bashful accents; 'I've collected a battalion here which is willing to go bring Tailor; but—they say—you—can't you show them where he is?'

'Yes,' said Little Nell, arising.

When the party arrived at Siboney, and deposited Tailor in the best place, Walkley had found a house and stocked it with canned soups. Therein Shackles and Little Nell revelled for a time, and then rolled on the floor in their blankets. Little Nell tossed a great deal. 'Oh, I'm so tired. Good God, I'm tired. I'm—tired.'

In the morning a voice aroused them. It was a swollen, important, circus voice, saying, 'Where is Mr. Nell? I wish to see him immediately.'

'Here I am, Rogers,' cried Little Nell.

'Oh, Nell,' said Rogers, 'here's a despatch to me which I thought you had better read.'

Little Nell took the despatch. It was: 'Tell Nell can't understand his inaction; tell him come home first steamer from Port Antonio, Jamaica.'

STEPHEN CRANE.

## *THE CHINESE EMPEROR AND HIS SURROUNDINGS.*

THERE are few things more fascinating to the human mind than an atmosphere of mystery. When to mystery is added a certain magnificence, it only requires the suggestion of a cloud of overshadowing sadness to make the combination all that the most sentimental could ask for, even in the pages of a romance. Yet, strangely enough, we are not accustomed to look upon the Chinese Emperor as a romantic figure ; although the mystery that enwraps him is so great, no European has the least idea as to how he really spends his days ; his magnificence is undoubted, and the impression of profound sadness that he makes upon all who see him is incontestable. In 1891 some Foreign Secretary of Legation wrote :

‘The Emperor looks younger even than he is, not more than sixteen or seventeen. Although his features are essentially Chinese, or rather Manchu, they wear a particular air of personal distinction. Rather pale and dark, with a well-shaped forehead, long black arched eyebrows, large mournful dark eyes, a sensitive mouth, and an unusually long chin, the young Emperor, together with an air of great gentleness and intelligence, wore an expression of melancholy, due, naturally enough, to the deprivation of nearly all the pleasures of his age and to the strict life which the hard and complicated duties of his high position force him to lead.’

‘Does he look very sorrowful?’ I asked the other day of an English Consul who had seen him just before his deposition. ‘Yes, very sorrowful.’ ‘Sick and sorrowful? or more sorrowful than sick?’ ‘More sorrowful than sick,’ was the uncompromising reply. This was at the time when Peking official reports represented him as dying, and when all the doctors of the vast Chinese Empire were summoned to Peking to prescribe for their Emperor.

That we do not regard his personality with more interest is probably because the mystery around him is too profound. The imagination needs details even to work up the picture of the interior of the Chinese palace. Its upcurved roofs, covered with yellow tiles glittering like gold in the sunshine, suggest a fairy tale, as one surveys them from the immense masses of masonry that

represent the walls of Peking. So light, so elegant, those pavilions, recalling the tents of nomad ancestors even by the down droop in the centre of the roof ridge, suggest a life of pleasure free from care, altogether irreconcilable with the fashion of Imperial audiences beginning at three o'clock in the morning.

We cannot wander through the penetralia of the forbidden city of Peking, shut off by substantial walls from the yet more massively walled outer city, and within which four-square again the Imperial palace stands. But we can visit at Kioto the palace in which the Mikados lived enshrined or imprisoned for centuries. It is the custom for travellers to ask for special letters from their Ministers in order to see this palace, and then to hurry through it, regretting there is nothing left in it worth the seeing. But I know few spots that so make me thrill, even in the remembering, as that inner room, where the Mikados used to sleep, the walls covered with life-size and lifelike paintings of the terribly beautiful king of beasts, and in the adjoining rooms all round the chambers of the guard of women, the only guards to whom the Mikados could in the end of all things trust the care of their sacred persons, never allowed to issue beyond the palace walls. To be the highest, greatest in the land, and only safe thus, guarded all round by women, and then to wake each morning staring at those fierce painted lions—could the irony of life be more complete?

It is possibly the sight of this Kioto palace, now laid open to the hasty glance of intruding foreigners, that has intensified my feeling about the Emperor of China—that pathetic figure about whom the struggle rages, yet who himself takes no part in the contest. We know that the Emperor of China has never ridden out, walked out, or driven out, as other young men do. His outings have been to pray at the Temple of Heaven, to offer sacrifice to the God of Agriculture, and to pray for rain. In a great jade palanquin carried by thirty-two men he has gone forth, and after long ritual observances has returned to sit down to a banquet in the immeasurable chamber of the Hall of Abstinence at four o'clock in the morning. Gentlemen in waiting duly serve His Imperial Majesty, but not till they have set up opposite to him the bronze statue bearing on its head the inscription 'Abstinence.' When the Emperor goes to pray for the harvest he passes the whole day beforehand in this same Hall of Abstinence in prayer, fasting, and meditation. Yet when he moves out of his palace the roads are remade before him, yellow sand is sprinkled over them. All people of the



baser sort—that is, every one but those who go before and follow after—are ordered to keep within doors. The Emperor, wearing a dragon robe and a cap of ermine surmounted by a knob of crimson velvet, ascends into his palanquin by a vermilion flight of steps, held by equerries in waiting. All his bearers wear robes of red silk over ash-coloured linen, all their boots are trimmed round the top with black fur, their caps are of leopard-skin, dappled with coins of gold, and with red velvet plumes kept in position by gold filigree plates, from which float yellow feathers down their backs. The palanquin is eight feet high and weighs about one ton sixteen hundredweight, but, as the Chinese chronicler records, ‘the bearers walk swiftly under its weight, like lightning-flashes, or shooting stars rushing across the sky.’

They are relieved at every few yards by a fresh set of thirty-two men. Five gigantic cars, usually drawn by elephants, roll ahead of the Emperor’s procession. Behind his palanquin march ten men armed with spears hung with leopards’ tails, ten men with swords, and another ten carrying bows and arrows, all representatives of the Tartar corps of the bodyguard. Behind these, again, walk about a hundred of the highest Manchu nobility until they arrive outside the middle gate, when there is a great mounting of gaily caparisoned prancing ponies. Outside this middle gate in full Court dress kneel a great company of civil and military officials not of sufficient rank to accompany the procession. All along the route are guards in full uniform, the doors and windows of every house and shop are closed, and red silk hangs in festoons in front of them; whilst bows and arrows, swords and spears, arranged in patterns with decorative lanterns and satin hangings, adorn the sentry stations. ‘The knowledge that our Emperor thus worships the gods and reveres his ancestors so devoutly, and prays for the people that they may be fed and clothed, well protected, and happy all over the land, must surely fill us with loyalty and admiration of his august person,’ concludes the Chinese chronicler.

It is in this manner Kwangshü, by the grace of God, &c., has been accustomed to—go out!—ever since at the age of four the Dowager Empress Tze Hsi, his aunt and since then mother by adoption, stole him from his cradle, contrary to the wishes of her sister, his real mother, to place him upon the throne of China; because he was the youngest person she could place there, and would thus ensure to herself the longest lease of power. Report says the child cried. He had good reason to do so. Contrast his

ceremonial and imprisoned life, his audiences before the daydawn, his many changings of sumptuous raiment and enforced stillness, with the sometimes called hard life of a young English farm-labourer. Can any one doubt which is the jollier?

Contrast sitting in your shirt-sleeves at six o'clock in the evening, with a glass of beer and a pipe, sprawling just as you please, shouting as loud as you like and what you like, with the Chinese Emperor's state banquet in the immeasurable hall, all alone, opposite to the bronze statue saying 'Abstinence'!

There have been fierce quarrels over Kwangshü's education. Tze Hsi (pronounced She) and his mother had a violent altercation about it one day. His mother was in perfect health at the time. Two days afterwards she was dead!—as officially stated, of pent-up anger in the heart.

The Empress Tze Hsi lives in China, which may be considered as being now in some parts in the condition in which Europe was in the fifteenth century, although in some ways it may rather resemble Europe in the thirteenth century. She thus uses mediæval methods. Setting this aside, the Chinese Empress resembles the present Duchess of Devonshire in that, so people say, there is nothing she has ever wished that she has not attained. She is undoubtedly a woman of great ability as well as of unswerving purpose. But the French saying, 'Qui veut la fin, veut les moyens,' was never more true of any one than of her. It is true that she is also an artist of no mean calibre, according to the Chinese standard, and often presents a favoured courtier with a picture done by her own hand. She writes poetry also, and has presented the Hanlin College with six hundred stanzas of her own writing. Besides all this, although only the concubine of the Emperor Hien Fung, yet since his death she has practically guided the destinies of the Chinese Empire—at first in conjunction with his widow Tze An, after her death with her step-sister's son as nominal Emperor, till in September, 1898, she deposed the young man she had herself placed upon the throne, and, for a time at any rate, issued edicts in her own name, self-appointed Empress over more than three hundred millions of human beings. That a woman should succeed in thus attaining the highest place in China, of all countries in the world, is the more remarkable. For amongst the Chinese the saying is, that were it not for the bearing of children it would be better to exterminate woman. Too much importance must not be attached to the immoralities attributed to the Empress

Tze Hsi. She is not a woman of low origin, as some English newspapers have reported. It is only noble Manchus who are selected as concubines for an emperor. At the same time, it is contrary to Chinese usage that a woman, who has occupied such a position, should ever be Dowager-Empress, much less Empress regnant, and the coarse imaginings of exalted Chinese mandarins would be sure to attribute vices to a woman in such a position even were there no foundation. At the same time, whilst no word of scandal touches the sacred head of Queen Victoria or of the youthful Queen Dowager of Spain, it must be noted that evil reports about Tze Hsi are very widespread in China, and very persistent. Kang Yü Wei, the leading Cantonese Reformer, openly writes of her as 'the antitype of those vile and licentious ancient Empresses, Lü and Wu.' He writes again: 'The False One (or Usurper) attempted to introduce avarice and licentiousness into the palace, in order to tempt our sovereign to destruction.' But he goes farther still, and touches upon matters more capable of proof, and more important to the world at large, when he says: 'This usurper, when she came into power in former years, poisoned the Eastern Empress, consort of Hien Fung. She murdered with poisoned wine the Empress of Fung Chih (her son), and by her acts made the late Emperor Hien Fung (her husband) die of spleen and indignation!' Thus another death of pent-up anger at the heart.

It is, however, strange, if this woman be so wholly bad, that she should have given the youthful Emperor good instructors. Weng Tung-ho, his tutor, and till June 1898 his special adviser, seems often to have withstood the Empress, and it was he, rather than Tze Hsi, who was reactionary, although of late Weng Tung-ho, the tutor, was beginning to see the need of progress, though probably not at the rapid rate of the Reformers, whom Kwangshü appointed as his councillors in June 1898. It must be either owing to his careful training or to heredity—Prince Chün, Kwangshü's father, was always highly esteemed, and of his mother we know certainly no evil—that all on a sudden the world finds itself confronted by the miracle of a Reformer on the vermilion throne in the palace, inside the forbidden precincts within the great city of Peking. Yet if the world had been watching it needed not have been surprised. We know that the Emperor, with all his state, has been brought up in a very simple self-denying way. The story goes that never has the youthful Emperor had the best of any-

thing even to eat. Never have early spring vegetables adorned his table before they have been long known on the tables of his subjects. At the Clear-Bright or Spring Festival the Court of Feasting presents forty different kinds of vegetables for the use of the Imperial tables; but if there is anything specially good among these vegetables, it is never suffered to reach the unfortunate Emperor, for the officials of his household, seeing the danger that, if they once served something exceptional, they would be required to keep up to the same standard, preserve always a consistent mediocrity in what they set before him, lest their heads should be the forfeit were there an occasional failure. And the same principle runs through the whole Imperial housekeeping. The Emperor has had to rise early and attend to affairs of State, such as could not naturally interest a lad; to whom also the constant State ceremonial would be equally irksome. It has been matter of notoriety that, though with abundant opportunities surrounding him, Kwangshü has abstained from wine, women, and cards. So long ago as 1894 he started as a Reformer, suddenly signifying his intention at the Peking competitive examinations to look over each essay and poem himself, and place the candidates according to their excellence. So much mystery surrounds the Imperial Court, it has not transpired what led the young Emperor, then little over twenty, to take this strange step. There were two hundred and eight competitors, and it took him three whole days to look over the papers. He stated definitely that he had done so himself, in the list that he made out, and in which the names were, to a great extent, inverted. For three men, placed amongst the last by the examining board, were marked out by the Emperor as among the six entitled to the highest honours; whilst a lately returned ambassador, who had a button and had but lately received the post of instructor to the heir apparent, although placed by the examiners amongst the first thirty and recommended to a higher post of honour, was by the Emperor placed in the third class, ordered to take off his button, and degraded to be junior secretary of the supervisorate.

The whole incident, whatever prompted it, whatever it led to, throws a great light upon the character of the young Emperor. It speaks for itself, showing that he has more energy and determination than those would think, who just see him in audience, clad in a sable robe, wearing the hat of State; his unusually large brilliant black eyes' giving 'a wonderfully sympathetic aspect to his mild, almost childish countenance.' A very leading

Kensington vicar was at one time reputed always to choose his curates by their eyes. Men with bright eyes overwork, he is reported to have said, and his parish needed men who would do so. Kwangshü's 'unusually large brilliant black eyes' seem to have carried him through three days of examination-papers.

There is another anecdote about him also significant enough. The Empress Tze Hsi's sixtieth birthday, had not the Japanese war interfered, would have been celebrated with unheard-of splendour throughout China, sixty years being Tennyson's celebrated Cycle of Cathay, to which he declared fifty years of Europe preferable, and I think most of us would very heartily agree with the poet. On this birthday the Christian women of China had decided to present the Empress with a Testament. All through the length and breadth of the Empire little congregations of Chinese Christian women saved up their carefully earned copper cash, and watched for the result with great eagerness. A revised edition of the Chinese translation was the outcome, beautifully printed, and above all beautifully bound in silver, enclosed in a silver casket, very finely worked. And at last the offering, altogether worthy of an empress's acceptance, was duly presented at Peking. What was the surprise of the agent at the chief missionary book depôt only a few hours afterwards to receive a message by a Palace eunuch, that the Emperor wanted a copy of the foreign book, which had just been presented to the Dowager-Empress! There was no other copy of this revised edition yet to be had. But the best copy of the best translation obtainable was at once handed to the eunuch, who presently returned with comments—believed to be in the Emperor's own handwriting—pointing out the discrepancies in the two translations, and saying he should like to have one quite the same as that presented to the Empress. The eunuch took away with him various other books, selected as likely to be useful to an Emperor of China. And here again the veil of mystery falls, and we know no more. Did the Emperor read them? Did the New Testament seem to him a strange history brought thus into his life without explanation or commentary? Or did it appeal to his repressed long-suffering soul? We know not. All we do know is, that just before the *coup d'état* last September, the Emperor's chosen advisers, and it seems Kwangshü himself, were considering whether to proclaim Christianity as the religion of China, and that when the *coup d'état* occurred Kang Yü Wei, before flying by the Emperor's advice, went for counsel to the missionary, Timothy Richard, the man who has done

more probably than any other man to reform China and prepare her people to be brought under Christian influences. This again looks as if the Testament had been read, if not by the Empress to whom it was given, with its costly binding and casquet, by him to whom it was not given, Kwangshü, whose soul after all must be as precious in the sight of Him on high as that of the poor coolie, to the saving of whom missionary effort is more generally addressed.

Kang Yü Wei himself is no Christian, but is a great scholar, who has brought out a new edition of the classics, the real meaning of which he contends has been obscured by multiplicity of commentators even to the blotting out of the personality of God, by a renewed belief in whom as a living Father there can alone, he says, be hope for the people of China. Here is his description of the Emperor's person: 'Port Arthur and Talienwan had just been taken over by Russia, and the Emperor wore an anxious, careworn expression. He was thin, but apparently in good health. He has a straight nose, round forehead, pleasant eyes, is clean-shaven, and has a pale complexion. He is of medium height. His hands are long and thin. He looked very intelligent, and had a kindly expression, altogether uncommon amongst the Manchus, or even amongst the Chinese!' As usual, the poor young fellow was led in by eunuchs, and took his seat on a dais on a large yellow cushion, in his accustomed attitude with his feet folded beneath him.

There let him sit, poor young Kwangshü, a pathetic figure! For since his last letters to Kang he has never spoken nor moved again, as far as the outer world of Europe knows. That silence of Kwangshü speaks as much for his tenacity of purpose as anything, especially after the two letters in which he took leave of his chosen adviser, and, as it almost seems, of the world in general.

September 16.—'We know that the Empire is in very troublous times. Unless we adopt Western methods it is impossible to save our Empire; unless we remove the old-fashioned Conservative Ministers and put in their stead young and intelligent men, possessed of a knowledge of Western affairs, it is impossible to carry out the reforms we had intended. But the Empress-Dowager does not agree with me: I have repeatedly advised Her Majesty, but she becomes enraged. Now I am afraid I shall not be able to protect my throne. You are hereby commanded to consult your colleagues and see what assistance you can get to save me. I am very anxious and distressed. I am anxiously waiting for your assistance. Respect this.'

September 17.—'I have commanded you to superintend the

establishment of the official organ. It is strongly against my wish. I have very great sorrow in my heart, which cannot be described with pen and ink. You must proceed at once abroad, and devise means to save me without a moment's delay. I am deeply affected by your loyalty and faithfulness. Please take great care of your health and body. I hope that before long you will be able to assist me again in reorganising my Empire, and to put everything upon a proper basis. This is my earnest wish.'

At four o'clock on the morning of September 20 Kang Yü Wei escaped from Peking, and, thanks to the protection of British Consuls and a British man-of-war, reached Japan in safety, where he found Liang, editor of 'Chinese Progress,' and some others of the Reform party. From their village home near Canton all Kang's kinsfolk escaped during the night. All Liang's family were not equally fortunate. Amongst others, his foster-mother was taken prisoner, according to Chinese usage, which makes relations of a criminal, even to the eighth degree, responsible. But at Peking Kang's brother lay unburied for many days after his head was cut off by Tze Hsi's orders, no man daring even to touch the dead body.

According to Kang, there is a sham eunuch in the Palace, called Li Luen-yên, who has more power than any of the Ministers. All the Viceroys have got their positions through bribing this man, who is immensely wealthy. He is popularly reputed never to get an audience for a Viceroy under 1,000/. Kang describes the Empress Tze Hsi as 'of medium height and commanding presence, rather imperious in manner. She has a dark, sallow complexion, long almond eyes, high nose, is fairly intelligent-looking, and has expressive eyes.'

He tells one more anecdote. 'After the occupation of Kiaochou by the Germans, the Emperor was very furious, and said to the Empress-Dowager, "Unless I have the power I will not take my seat as Emperor; I will abdicate." The result was that the Empress-Dowager gave in to him to a certain extent, telling him that he could do as he liked; but although she said this with her mouth, her heart was different.'

Before the Empress handed over the reins of government to the Emperor, a year or two ago, she used to see many Ministers but since then she has only seen eunuchs and officials belonging to the inner department.

Kang was recommended to the Emperor by one of the Censors



Then Weng Tung-ho, the Emperor's tutor, supposed to be one of the most conservative officials in China, but not really so, took him up, also the President of the Board of Rites. Therefore this so-called visionary, and certainly great scholar, had high recommendations. He did not push himself in, nor was he introduced by improper people. Persons of confidence in high place recommended him to the Emperor, and to the weary heartsick youth we can fancy how Kang's long list of projected reforms sounded like a beautiful fairy-tale or a gospel of glad tidings.

Then came the awakening. With all those he trusted dead around him—for all the Emperor's confidential attendants are said to have been killed, as well as his chosen councillors—no loud outcry from Kwangshü penetrates to the outer world. And to my mind that silence of his is one of the most august things about him. With his sad face and his frightened-looking young wife, he was present when the ladies of the Diplomatic Corps carried their point and interviewed Tze Hsi, and she tasted the tea, as she handed it to each guest, to show that it was not poisoned, then broke down and wept aloud. Kwangshü did not weep.

But we cannot doubt that but for the onlooking of the European Powers he would be in his grave long ere this by reason of pent-up anger at the heart, or some other, to Europeans, unknown malady. And since the nations of Europe have been the means of keeping him alive, let them not forget there is one Kwangshü, for close on twenty-five years nominal lord and master of over four hundred millions of people, put over them not by his own will, deposed from his high place without his own consent, in himself—as I think these few incidents, that have filtered through to the ears of Europe, show—a sufficiently noteworthy young man, and at all events one who dared all to improve the condition of the Empire with which he had been entrusted. If not by the side of Luther, yet by the side of such failures as Rienzi or Savonarola, the large brilliant eyes of Kwangshü may fairly look out upon the world.

But there is one great all-important difference. Kwangshü is yet alive. Oh, the pity of it! that no European Power saw its way to stand by him and the youth of China, and to help the Reform party to so far purify the administration of China as to enable it to stand a solid, impenetrable, peace-loving Empire between the scantily peopled, wind-blown stretches of Siberia and India of the flashing eyes and covert schemes!

ALICIA BEWICKE LITTLE.

## THE BALZAC CENTENARY.

MAY 20, 1799.

THE hundredth anniversary of the birth of Honoré de Balzac is to be celebrated this month in his native town of Tours. In Paris also, if the effervescences of political life leave any leisure for the commemoration of a merely literary event, there will be fit jubilation in honour of the author of the *Comédie Humaine*, who has assuredly taken brevet rank as the greatest of French novelists.

It is not probable that, at the present day, any one will seriously dispute Balzac's claim to this praise. He has indeed a score of faults from which his rivals were free, just as one or other of them possesses a score of merits which he never, with all his painstaking and rewriting, could acquire. The humour of *Tartarin*, the manliness of *D'Artagnan*, the simple pathos of the foundling *François*, are not to be matched in the work of Balzac, any more than the brilliant and varied colouring of '*Salammbô*,' the constructive art of '*Boule de Suif*,' or the exquisite language of '*Mademoiselle de Maupin*.' The fine filed phrase of Flaubert and the lucidity of Maupassant were as far beyond Balzac's grasp as the light-hearted gaiety of '*Gyp*' or the poetical exuberance of Daudet. But he possessed something that transcended all these varied and delightful gifts of the fairies: he had that indefinable part of genius which can hardly be better expressed than by Mr. Henry James's phrase of '*incomparable power*.' Whether one judges Balzac's work in itself or in its relationship to all that has been written since, this is the great fact that remains after all objections have been duly weighed. '*Sans génie, je suis flambé*,' Balzac cried out to his sister Laure; and it was just the genius that bloweth where it listeth—which the curious in psychology may try to analyse if they will—that has brought him to the highest place in the ranks of French story-tellers.

Balzac's literary work has been the subject of so much careful study at the hands of the best critics, beginning with his contemporaries Gautier and Sainte-Beuve, that one need not ask the reader on this festive occasion to listen to a new analysis of its distinctive qualities or a catalogue of its merits. As a rule, the

centenary of a great writer's birth is a time at which regular criticism may profitably be silent. It is then at once too late and too early to say anything of importance. This is certainly true in the case of Balzac. In one sense, all that can be said of him has been said. We are all familiar with the scheme and scope of the *Comédie Humaine*, and we are rather tired of the long discussion whether, in this wonderful presentment of an entire society, Balzac copied life, or life has since modelled itself upon Balzac.

It would not be profitable to attempt to sum up this question within the limits of a brief essay, nor is it wise for a contemporary to plume himself upon being able to add anything to the judgments of Mr. Leslie Stephen, Mr. Henry James, and Hippolyte Taine, who have spoken so well for three countries on the most local and yet the most cosmopolitan of novelists. One does not mean, indeed, that the last word has been said upon Balzac, but we are still too near his time to think of saying it. The circles made by the huge stone which he splashed into the waters of literature—some might say the mud which he stirred up from their depths—still prevent our seeing quite clearly all the outlines of his work. It will need another generation or two before Balzac's figure recedes into the middle distance sufficiently to have its relations measured and its perspective found. At present it still dominates French literature, and the centenary of his death is likely to come round before the critic can claim 'to see him steadily and see him whole.' Yet it is impossible to keep silence when praise is expected. Mere gratitude compels one to add one's voice, however feeble an echo it may be, to the chorus of laudation that will shortly be heard rising from Touraine and swelling all over the world; for wherever men read French, there are to be found admirers of Balzac, though it might be rash to make the assertion include women.

Scott and Dumas are no more certainly 'the delight of generous boys' than Balzac is an awakener and eye-opener to the adolescent. He is one of the very few novelists whose name many readers can associate with an epoch in their intellectual history. Any one who has been taken with 'the Balzac fever' between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, and has given himself up ungrudgingly to its fascinating grip, will probably allow that, like other fevers, it generally causes a sudden growth in such patients as have not yet reached their full stature. It is possible that the after-effects are not always of the healthiest kind. A certain section of Balzac's

critics argue that his 'incomparable power' has been shown, for example, in perverting a great part of French journalism from the highly moral status which it occupied before Agamemnon to its present unsatisfactory condition, which they assert to be due to the influence of Lousteau, Finot, Hector Merlin, and even Emile Blondet upon the minds and ideals of the rising generation. That is part of the discussion mentioned above, and one need only observe that, whatever be the decision, it is equally a testimony to Balzac's ability. Good or bad, the fascination is there. All of us who love Balzac can fix the exact hour and place of the first introduction to him—whether it was through the means of the 'big yellow books, quite impudently French,' of the *édition déjénitive*, or 'the new edition, fifty volumes long,' of which Bishop Blougram talked. The latter edition is preferable for the beginner: its volumes gain much from the very vileness of their print and paper, allowing one to read them over meals, or stick them into a coat-pocket to take on the river, or generally to make them more inseparable companions than is possible with any volume whose *format* has to be respected.

In England this centenary happens to coincide most appropriately with the appearance of the first complete—or almost complete—translation of the *Comédie Humaine* which has been attempted in this country, though an American version was earlier in existence. This work, which has been executed under the editorship of Mr. George Saintsbury, has rather disproved the late Mr. James Payn's assertion in these pages that Balzac 'was not translatable, or when translated was not readable.' Mr. Payn was, of course, quite justified in his statement by such specimens of Balzac in English as existed when he wrote, some twelve years ago. As a matter of general opinion, however, one would scarcely agree with him, for Balzac's weakest point is his style, and therefore he seems to offer more chance of success to the translator than other great writers. Gautier or Mérimée—even Victor Hugo and Dumas—must lose in translation a far larger proportion of their merits than Balzac, whose language is so often lumbering, heavy, and uninspired, that one is tempted to believe that his soul must have passed through several German incarnations before settling down in his body. The real difficulty in presenting him to an English audience lies in his atmosphere rather than in his language. 'To make a successful first acquaintance with Balzac,' one has said elsewhere, 'it is needful to know more than a little

of French law and manners, history and politics.' As a rule, those who possess this foundation are able to read the *Comédie Humaine* in the original. Now, however, the admirable team of translators organised by Mr. Saintsbury have made it possible for the purely English reader to pick up all this knowledge as he progresses through the forty handsome volumes in which, with a free and not always very happy rearrangement, all but two or three volumes of the French forty have been faithfully presented. That is certainly the best monument with which England could celebrate the centenary of Balzac's birth.

In France the celebrations will necessarily take another form. Tours, one understands, is to be their headquarters. This, in spite of the proverb, is perfectly natural. The Garden of France, as pleasant Touraine is often called, has given the world at least three writers of the first class. René Descartes is universally admitted to be the father of modern philosophy; François Rabelais is held in universal honour as the 'Prince de toute sapience et de toute comédie;' posterity and foreign nations have joined with Touraine in adding to these two the name of Honoré de Balzac. The author of the *Comédie Humaine* was born on May 20, 1799—according to the latest authorities, though his sister gives the date as the 16th—at Tours, where folk are bestirring themselves to celebrate the event in a fitting manner. This seems to be a refutation of the cynical old adage, but it is only since Balzac's death that his native district has awoken to his merits. Like Burns, he might have prophesied that he would be more respected there in a hundred years than he was in his lifetime. We know that he designed to leave his library, some six thousand well-read volumes, to the city of Tours. But the heartless indifference of his fellow-citizens to his works wounded him so much that he changed his mind and cancelled the legacy, leaving the books to come ultimately under the hammer at the Hôtel Drouot. His affection for Touraine was very real, however, as the student of his writings knows well. Perhaps it is best expressed in the preface to the 'Contes Drolatiques,' that brilliant Pantagruelistic *tour de force* which both the English and the American translators have wisely refrained from touching, where we read that the author's highest ambition is to be considered 'bon Tourangeau, et entretenir en joye les amples lippées des gens fameux de ce mignon et plantureux pays . . . qui ha fourmy sa grant part des hommes de renom à la France.' Even in the

distressing *œuvres de jeunesse*, which one may fairly suppose that hardly any living Englishman but the indefatigable Mr. Saintsbury has read from beginning to end, we are told by that student that it is 'the affectionate clinging of the author to the scenery of Touraine, which sometimes inspires him with his least bad passages.'

It is a curious thing that, although nearly fifty years have elapsed since Balzac's death, and his greatness is thus universally admitted to be a source of honest pride to France and Touraine, no attempt has yet been made to give the world an adequate biography of the man. The history of his writings has been most carefully and laboriously unravelled; but M. Spoelberch de Lovenjoul, to whom students of the *Comédie Humaine* owe so large a debt, states with justice that Balzac the man is only imperfectly known to the world. It is not that, like Thackeray, he explicitly forbade his life to be written; but he drew so thick a veil of mystery over much of his existence that no one has as yet been able to dispel it, and much investigation is still necessary before the road can be cleared for the biographer. This mystery M. Spoelberch de Lovenjoul attributes to two main causes: the discretion which Balzac always felt it necessary to preserve as to the preponderant part played in his life by women, and the constant embarrassment of his finances, which caused him to be in a chronic state of hiding from his creditors. The strong theatrical element in his nature further inclined him to enjoy mystery for its own sake.

The best contemporary authorities for his life—his sister, Madame de Surville, and Théophile Gautier—undoubtedly reserved much of what they might have told, and there was much in Balzac's life which they did not know. In his published correspondence the seven or eight most interesting years of his life in Paris—the years from 1822 to 1829, during which he was forming himself—are almost a blank. We do not even know how much foundation there is in fact for the life of 'Horace St. Aubin' which Jules Sandeau attached to one of the novels which young Balzac had written under that aristocratic pseudonym, and which includes an anecdote of how the young author forced his manuscript on a reluctant publisher literally at the pistol's mouth, which is quite in the true Balzacian humour.

What we do know of the first half of Balzac's life has to be pieced together from a thousand scrappy sources, many of which

are the confessedly autobiographical passages in his works. For instance, the amazingly bad *œuvres de jeunesse* are explained by Balzac himself as intentional exercises, which he would not sign with his own name for fear of degrading it. 'I wrote novels,' he says, 'for mere study—one to train myself for dialogue, another to practise description, a third to group my personages, and so on.' How far, one would like to know, was this actually the case, and how far was it an excuse invented after the fact? All that we certainly know is that Balzac wrote some forty volumes in eight years, none of which has the least spark of genius, before he suddenly 'found himself' (like Mr. Kipling's steamer) with the 'Chouans.' The full history of those eight years spent in various garrets in the company of the prototypes of D'Arthez and his *cénacle* on the one hand, Lousteau and the esurient journalists on the other, would be exceedingly interesting; but the century is almost at an end, and there is still no sign of its being written. The announcement that M. Spoelberch de Lovenjoul or some equally competent writer had undertaken a definitive biography of Balzac would be the best possible celebration of this centenary.

Luckily the judicious reader finds the important part of Balzac's life writ large in the *Comédie Humaine*. One may adapt Mr. Meredith's epigram, and say that there is nothing the man suffers which the novelist cannot profit by. It will be shown later on that Balzac had a peculiar faculty of impersonally acquiring experience; but there can be no doubt that he also made use of every scrap of his own personal experiences in his work. Some of Balzac's most intimate friends have left us the key to many autobiographical passages that might otherwise have been obscure, whilst others are explained by his correspondence. Thus the story of his schooldays at Vendôme, with his insatiable love of reading, his 'Treatise on the Will' written at fourteen, and his schoolboy dreams of greatness, is fully told in 'Louis Lambert.' 'César Birotteau' is the fruit of his years in the notary's office. 'La Peau de Chagrin' recounts Balzac's own temptations on plunging into the dizzy world of Paris. 'Facino Cane' contains his cynical commentary on Béranger's cheerful line,

'Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!'

The history of David Séchard in 'Illusions Perdues' revives the memory of Balzac's own trial of fortune as printer and paper-maker, and Eve's unfortunate speculation in almanacks is a kind of parody on those piles of Molières and La Fontaines which were sold



as waste paper, but would now be worth untold sums to a collector if they could be recovered from the dark backward and abysm of the pulping mill. 'Albert Savarus' contains a portrait of Balzac at forty, slightly idealised, but (according to Gautier) perfectly recognisable. One may quote this passage, which has the same kind of interest as those portraits of themselves with which great painters have filled a room in Florence. Most of Balzac's friends agreed with the verdict of the Abbé de Grancey, that it was a 'magnificent head' which he thus described in detail:—

'Black hair already streaked with a little grey, hair like that of St. Peter and St. Paul in pictures, with thick shining curls, hair as stiff as horsehair; a round white throat like a woman's; a splendid forehead, furrowed by the strong median line which great schemes, great thoughts, deep meditations stamp on a great man's brow; an olive complexion marbled with red, a square nose, eyes of flame, hollow cheeks, with two long lines betraying much suffering, a mouth with a sardonic smile, and a small chin, narrow and too short; crows' feet on his temples; deep-set eyes, moving in their sockets like burning balls. . . . There is more than one secret behind that face, at once so terrible and so gentle, patient and yet impatient, broad and yet hollow.'

There is all the less need to speak here of Balzac's life in Paris, because it has already been described in these pages (May 1886, p. 470). There are many romantic matters in it on which one would gladly dwell: the privations of the young student who was only kept alive by the money which his affectionate grandmother managed to lose to him at whist or boston on his regular visits; the house decorated with charcoal inscriptions on its grey plaster walls, 'rosewood panels' here, 'Venetian mirror' there, 'Gobelins tapestry,' 'Picture by Raphael,' in which Balzac anticipated all those pleasures of the collector which he was allowed to enjoy in fact for so brief a time in the Rue Fortunée; the strange method of working on proofs which led the printers to say in jest that it was not worth while to set up Balzac's original MSS., that if he were sent a proof of whatever was in hand—from an almanack to a Bible—the mere sight of type set his brain to work, and the proof came back duly revised out of knowledge into another scene of the Comédie. But one must pass on to speak of two points in Balzac's peculiar genius, which may conclude this essay.

In the fascinating letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth

Barrett which were recently published, there are two passages which between them sum up Balzac's most distinctive qualities. In April 1846 Browning wrote to Miss Barrett in praise of Balzac's 'faculty,' mentioning the admirable 'Messe de l'Athée,' which enshrines a story told in the real world of Napoleon's doctor, Dupuytren, and adding—

'For *you* with your love of a "story," what an unceasing delight must be that very ingenious way of his [Balzac's], by which he connects the new novel with its predecessors—keeps telling you more and more news yet of the people you have got interested in, but seemed to have done with! Rastignac, Madame d'Espard, Desplein, &c—they keep alive, moving—is it not ingenious?'

That special quality in Balzac has been a revelation to many a young reader. Too often it happens that we close a novel with the feeling that we have been defrauded of much of the history of the people in whom the author has taught us to take a sympathetic interest. We want to know more about them—to learn their earlier life, to discover how they passed their declining years, to see them in other circumstances than those of the few episodes which make a book. Occasionally a novelist tries to satisfy this craving by giving us one of those biographical studies for which Mr. Arthur Balfour lately expressed his liking, and carrying a hero through all stages of life from the cradle to the grave. The method is heroic, and few can act up to it. Fielding stops short at the marriage of Mr. Jones, and the tiny glimpse into that gentleman's later life which has been vouchsafed to us by Mr. Andrew Lang only whets an insatiable curiosity. Dumas, in spite of his gigantic powers of endurance, had to cut two great slices, amounting to thirty years in all, out of the career of his musketeers in order to keep his readers alert through the eleven volumes, and so to achieve the highest end of literary art, which Sam Weller justly defined as making the reader 'vish there vos more.'

Balzac was the first novelist who had the courage to conceive and the genius to depict a world as real and complex as the one that we are educated, in spite of Berkeley, to call real, and much more amusing, in which it is possible to pursue any one who strikes your fancy through volume after volume until you know all about him, and of which a biographical dictionary has been compiled, as full of matter as 'Who's Who.' Thackeray

nibbled tentatively at a similar scheme, but it was too big for him; Anthony Trollope tried it with success on the tiny world of a cathedral town; M. Zola has modified without improving it. Possibly the day will come when Balzac's invention will be carried still further, and all the novelists of a generation will agree to deal with a common set of characters, who may thus be presented to the world as an even more complete set of types than Balzac has given us in the *Comédie Humaine*. The tendencies of this age are all towards co-operation: historical work is already conducted on that interesting principle—and it would be very agreeable to see its effect on imaginative writing.

Without insisting too much upon 'the coming of that glorious time,' when the Society of Authors will arrange to let out the use of a certain number of stock characters for each book to its approved members, one may remind the modern reader, who is apt to skip introductions, that in this plan of unifying and vivifying his work lay Balzac's special claim to originality in fiction. His inspiration was derived, he tells us, from Scott: where he saw a chance to improve on the model was in the scheme of his whole work. Scott was essentially an improvisator, or *trouvère*, who poured out great stories without any definite plan, without even imagining that such a definite plan could be desirable. Balzac saw the possibility of raising the novel a step higher in the scale of being. By linking his stories into one great whole—he had already written a good many when this brilliant idea flashed upon him—he saw his way to an aim which the majority of story-tellers are inclined to consider worthier than that of mere amusement: whether they are right or not, of course, involves a very old and tough question which one does not propose to revive here.

'Chance,' said Balzac, 'is the greatest romancer in the world; we have only to study it. French society would be the real author; I should only be the secretary. By drawing up an inventory of vices and virtues, by collecting the chief facts of the passions, by depicting characters, by choosing the principal incidents of social life, by composing types out of a combination of homogeneous characteristics, I might perhaps succeed in writing the history which so many historians have neglected: that of Manners. By patience and perseverance I might produce for France in the nineteenth century the book which we must all regret that Rome, Athens, Tyre, Memphis, Persia, and India have

not bequeathed to us; that history of their social life which, prompted by the Abbé Barthélemy, Monteil patiently and steadily tried to write for the Middle Ages, but in an unattractive form.'

It is an interesting commentary upon this declaration that the very name of Monteil, though he was really one of the founders of the modern historical school—one of the first, that is, to make war on the conception of history as a mere catalogue of battles and diplomacy—is practically unknown to the modern reader, while Balzac's fame is world-wide: such is the advantage of an attractive form. The *Comédie Humaine* is certainly, as its author desired that it should be, a remarkably fine history of French manners—a reproduction, in fact, of the whole French world of the first half of the century, which, even if it be not true, is more verisimilar than the truth. This it is which gives Balzac's work its peculiarly intense power of gripping the attention, and so gives rise to the phenomenon that has been named as 'the Balzac fever' in young readers. Hence also it arises that Balzac's 'incomparable power' is really known only to those who have read the *Comédie Humaine* right through. Thus, as has been already said, the practically complete translation of it which has just been given to the world under the care of Mr. Saintsbury affords, to a great number of readers in this country, their first opportunity of properly knowing Balzac. His greatest stories, of course, like 'Père Goriot' and 'Eugénie Grandet,' have long been accessible in English. But only a very inadequate notion of the whole edifice can be gained from these detached pavilions and lofty pinnacles. You must roam at large through the massive building, upstairs and downstairs and in my lady's chamber, walk through the echoing corridors and vast saloons as well as peep into dark cupboards and dusty corners, before you can pronounce with any certainty upon the merits of the architect. It is, to drop the metaphor, only those who have worked their way through the whole forty volumes of the *Comédie*—beginning best of all, perhaps, with 'Père Goriot' and the lamentable but very interesting history of Lucien de Rubempré—who can be said to know the real Balzac.

Then it is that the three or four thousand personages of the *Comédie* become, while the spell is at work, no less real and often more vivid than the less complex or less comprehensible beings that one meets every day *de par le monde*. Their creator—their *bon gros libertin de père*, as Taine happily calls him—

found them so himself, which probably accounts for their vitality so long after his death. There are many stories in proof of this, which may be new to some readers and friendly to others. One relates how Balzac met Jules Sandeau, who was much concerned about his sister's serious illness and naturally began to tell Balzac about it. Balzac listened for a time with a rather abstracted air, and made some perfunctorily polite remarks. Then he broke in—'Well, but come back to the real world. I want to consult you about Eugénie Grandet!' Madame de Surville relates that she was curious to know about the earlier life of one of her brother's characters, the Capitaine de Jordy who appears in the 'Médecin de Campagne.' She asked Balzac, who thought gravely for a minute or two, and then shook his head. 'No,' he said regretfully; 'I had not the pleasure of knowing M. de Jordy before he came to Nemours.' And it was no uncommon thing for Balzac to greet a friend with such a remark as this: 'Have you heard the latest news? Félix de Vandenesse is going to marry Mademoiselle de Grandville—an excellent match for him, in spite of all that Mademoiselle de Bellefeuille has cost the Grandvilles.' After all, when a novelist takes his characters as seriously as this, he has some right to expect that they will outlive him.

The other quality that marks Balzac is named in one of the charming letters of Miss Barrett, whose literary judgments were always acute and often illuminative. It will be seen that she anticipated Philarette Chasles' famous definition of Balzac as the supreme *voyant* or seer among novelists, in which all later critics of eminence have concurred. 'For Balzac,' she writes in answer to the letter quoted already, 'I have had my full or overfull pleasure from that habit of his you speak of . . . and which seems to prove his own good faith in the life and reality of his creations in such a striking manner. He is a writer of most wonderful faculty—with an overflow of life everywhere—with the vision and the utterance of a great seer.' This recalls Balzac's own remarkable account of his method, which is, so far as one remembers, unique among novelists. Most writers of fiction who have described the way in which their stories were 'revealed' to them—as Thackeray says—have given the impression that they saw their characters in action and heard their conversations, and had merely to chronicle the figments of their imagination—to play, to what Carlyle calls 'the Theatre under a Man's own Hat,' the part which pirates with illicit notebooks are reported to

have played when Shakespeare's pieces were first given at the Globe. Others have grown into novelists out of the childish habit, known to the least imaginative among us, of telling oneself stories, full of romance and hard riding, fighting and love-making and treasure-seeking, in which the narrator is always his own hero. Balzac's method was something between the two, and different from either. It might be described in those lines of Emerson which lend themselves so provokingly to parody—Gautier called it the faculty of Avatar. Balzac himself describes it in a rather long but important passage :

'One passion only had power to draw me from my studies ; and yet, what was that passion but a study of another kind ? I used to watch the manners and customs of the Faubourg, its inhabitants and their characteristics. . . . Even then observation had come to be an instinct with me, a faculty of penetrating to the soul without neglecting the body ; or rather, a power of grasping external details so thoroughly that they never detained me for a moment, and at once I passed beyond and through them. I could enter into the life of the human creatures whom I watched, just as the dervish in the "Arabian Nights" could pass into any soul or body after pronouncing a certain formulâ. . . .

'To come out of my own ways of life, to be another than myself through a kind of intoxication of the intellectual faculties, and to play this game at will, such was my recreation. Whence comes the gift ? Is it a kind of second sight ? Is it one of those powers which when abused end in madness ? I have never tried to discover its source ; I possess it, I use it, that is all.'

Yes, 'that is all'—genius, in fact, and inspiration are enough to explain Balzac's pre-eminent place. The words are easy to write, but to expound their meaning is a task for which human philosophy is no more adequate to-day than it was when man was still arboreal. In one respect, however, we have advanced : we can enjoy and appreciate, though we are still in the last resort incompetent to analyse and understand. And so a thousand pens are at work to praise the great monument which rises high and aloof from among its lesser fellows in France, and bears on its plinth of rough-hewn granite this brief inscription—the triumphant name of Honoré de Balzac.

W. E. GARRETT FISHER.

### THE ORPHAN.

SHINING serenely as some immeasurable mirror beneath the smiling face of heaven, the solitary ocean lay in unrippled silence. It was in those placid latitudes south of the line in the Pacific, where weeks, aye months, often pass without the marginless blue level being ruffled by any wandering keel. Here, in almost perfect security from molestation by man, the innumerable denizens of the deep pursue their never-ending warfare, doubtless enjoying to the full the brimming cup of life without a weary moment and with no dreary anticipations of an unwanted old age.

Now it fell on a day that the calm surface of that bright sea was broken by the sudden upheaval of a compact troop of sperm whales from the inscrutable depths wherein they had been roaming and recruiting their gigantic energies upon the abundant molluscs, hideous of mien and insatiable of maw, that, like creations of a diseased mind, lurked far below the sunshine. The school consisted of seven cows and one mighty bull, who was unique in appearance, for instead of being in colour the unrelieved sepia common to his kind he was curiously mottled with creamy white, making the immense oblong cube of his head look like a weather-worn monolith of Siena marble. Easeful as any Arabian khalif, he lolled supine upon the glittering folds of his couch, the welcoming wavelets caressing his vast form with gentlest touch, and murmuring softly as by their united efforts they rocked him in rhythm with their melodic lullaby. Around him glided his faithful harem—gentle timid creatures, no one of them a third of their lord's huge bulk, but still majestic in their proportions, being each some forty-five feet in length by thirty in girth. Unquestionably the monarch of the flood, their great chief accepted in complacent dignity their unremitting attentions, nor did their playful gambols stir him in the least from his attitude of complete repose.

But while the busy seven were thus disporting themselves in happy security there suddenly appeared among them a delightful companion in the shape of a newly born calf, elegantly dappled like his sire, the first-born son of the youngest mother in the group. It is not the habit of the cachalot to show that intense



self-effacing devotion to its young which is evinced by other mammals, especially whales of the mysticetæ. Nevertheless, as the expectation of this latest addition to the family had been the reason of their visit to these quiet latitudes, his coming made a pleasant little ripple of satisfaction vibrate throughout the group. Even the apparently impenetrable stolidity of the head of the school was aroused into some faint tokens of interest in the new comer, who clung leech-like to his mother's side, vigorously draining the enormous convexity of her bosom of its bounteous flood of milk. So well did he thrive, that at the end of a week the youngster was able to hold his own with the school in a race, and competent also to remain under water quite as long as his mother. Then the stately leader signified to his dependents that the time was now at hand when they must change their pleasant quarters. Food was less plentiful than it had been, which was but natural, remembering the ravages necessarily made by such a company of monsters. Moreover, a life of continual ease and slothful luxury such as of late had been theirs was not only favourable to the growth of a hampering investiture of parasites—barnacles, limpets, and weed—all over their bodies, but it completely unfitted them for the stern struggle awaiting them, when in their periodical progress round the world they should arrive on the borders of the fierce Antarctic Zone. And besides all these, had they forgotten that they were liable to meet with man! A sympathetic shudder ran through every member of the school at that dreaded name, under the influence of which they all drew closer around their chief, sweeping their broad flukes restlessly from side to side and breathing inaudibly.

The outcome of the conference, decided, as human meetings of the kind are apt to be, by the commanding influence of one master will, was that on the next day they would depart for the south by easy stages through the teeming 'off-shore' waters of South America. All through that quiet night the mighty creatures lay almost motionless on the surface, each the opaque centre of a halo of dazzling emerald light, an occasional drowsy spout from their capacious lungs sliding through the primeval stillness like the sigh of some weary Titan. When at last the steel-blue dome above, with its myriad diamond spangles, began to throb and glow with tremulous waves of lovely vari-coloured light flowing before the conquering squadrons of the sun, the whole troop, in open order about their guide, turned their heads

steadfastly to the south-west, steering an absolutely undeviating course for their destination by their innate sense of direction alone. Up sprang the flaming sun, a vast globe of fervent fire that even at the horizon's edge seemed to glow with meridian strength. And right in the centre of his blazing disc appeared three tiny lines, recognisable even at that distance by the human eye as the masts of a ship whose hull was as yet below the apparent meeting-place of sea and sky. This apparition lay fairly in the path of the advancing school, who, unhappily for them, possessed but feeble vision and that only at its best straight behind them. So on they went in leisurely fashion, occasionally pausing for a dignified descent in search of food, followed by an equally stately re-appearance and resumption of their journey. Nearer and nearer they drew to the fatal area wherein they would become visible to the keen-eyed watchers at the mast-head of that lonely ship, still in perfect ignorance of any possible danger being at hand. Suddenly that mysterious sense owned by them, which is more than hearing, gave warning of approaching peril. All lay still, though quivering through every tense sinew of their huge bodies with the apprehension of unknown enemies, their heads half raised from the sparkling sea-surface and their fins and flukes testing the vibrations of the mobile element like the diaphragm of a phonograph. Even the youngling clung to his mother's side as if glued thereto under the influence of a terror that, while it effectually stilled his sportiveness, gave him no hint of what was coming. At the instance of the Head all sank silently and stone-like without any of those preliminary tail flourishings and arching of the back that always distinguish the unworried whale from one that has received alarming news in the curious manner already spoken of. They remained below so long and went to so great a depth, that all except the huge leader were quite exhausted when they returned again to the necessary air, not only from privation of breath, but from the incalculable pressure of the superincumbent sea. So for a brief space they lay almost motionless, the valves of their spiracles deeply depressed as they drew in great volumes of revivifying breath, and their great frames limply yielding to the heave of the gliding swell. They had scarcely recovered their normal energy when into their midst rushed the destroyers, bringing with them the realisation of all those paralysing fears. First to be attacked was the noble bull, and once the first bewildering shock and smart had passed he gallantly maintained the reputa-

tion of his giant race. Every device that sagacity could conceive or fearlessness execute was tried by him, until the troubled ocean around the combatants was all a-boil, and its so recently unsullied surface was littered with tangled wreaths of blood-streaked foam. Whether from affection or for protection is uncertain, but the rest of the family did not attempt to flee. All seven of the cows kept close to their lord, often appearing as if they would shield him with their own bodies from the invisible death-darts that continually pierced him to the very seat of his vast vitality. And this attachment proved their own destruction, for their assailants, hovering around them with the easy mobility of birds, slew them at their leisure, not even needing to hamper themselves by harpooning another individual. Instead, they wielded their long lances upon the unresisting females, leaving the ocean monarch to his imminent death. So successful were these tactics that before an hour had flown, while yet the violet tint of departing night lingered on the western edge of the sea, the last one of those mighty mammals had groaned out the dregs of her life. Flushed with conquest and breathless from their great exertions, the victors lolled restfully back in their boats, while all around them upon the incarnadined waters the massy bodies of their prey lay gently swaying to the slumberous roll of the silent swell.

Meanwhile, throughout that stark battle, what of the youngling's fate? By almost a miracle, he had passed without scathe. What manner of dread convulsion of Nature was in progress he could not know—he was blind and deaf and almost lifeless with terror. With all that wide ocean around him he knew not whither to flee from this day of wrath. Of all those who had been to him so brief a space ago the living embodiment of invincible might, not one remained to help or shield him, none but were involved in this cataclysm of blood. His kindred were cut off from him, he was overlooked by his enemies, and when he came to himself he was alone. A sudden frantic impulse seized him, and under its influence he fled, fled as the bee flies, but without the homing instinct to guide him, southward through the calm blue silences of that sleeping ocean. On, on, he fled untiring, until behind him the emerald sheen of his passage through the now starlit waters broadened into a wide blaze of softest light. Before him lay the dark, its profound depths just manifested by the occasional transient gleam of an uneasy medusa or the swift flight of a terrified shark. When compelled to break the glassy surface for

breath there was a sudden splash, and amid the deep sigh from his labouring lungs came the musical fall of the sparkling spray. When morning dawned again on his long objectless flight, unfailing instinct warned him of his approach to shallower waters, and with slackening speed he went on, through the tender diffused sunlight of those dreamy depths, until he came to an enormous submarine forest, where the trees were fantastic abutments of living coral, the leaves and fronds of dull-hued fucus or algæ, the blossoms of orchid-like sea-anemones or zoophytes, and the birds were darting, gliding fish, whose myriad splendid tints blazed like illuminated jewels.

Here, surely, he might be at peace and find some solace for his loneliness, some suitable food to replace that which he had hitherto always found awaiting him, and now would find nevermore. Moving gently through the interminably intricate avenues of this submarine world of stillness and beauty, his small lower jaw hanging down as usual, he found abundant store of sapid molluscs that glided down his gaping gullet with a pleasant tickling, and were soon followed by a soothing sense of hunger satisfied. When he rose to spout he was in the midst of a weltering turmoil of broken water, where the majestic swell fretted and roared in wrath around the hindering peaks of the great reef—a group of islands in the making. Here, at any rate, he was safe, for no land was in sight whence might come a band of his hereditary foes, while into that network of jagged rocks no vessel would ever dare to venture. After a few days of placid enjoyment of this secure existence he began to feel courage and independence, although still pining for the companionship of his kind. Thus he might have gone on for long, but that an adventure befell him which raised him at once to his rightful position among the sea-folk. During his rambles through the mazes and glades of this subaqueous paradise he had once or twice noticed between two stupendous columns of coral a black space where the water was apparently of fathomless depth. Curiosity, one of the strongest influences actuating the animate creation, impelled him to investigate this chasm, but something, he knew not what, probably inherited caution, had hitherto held him back. At last, having met with no creature nearly his own size, and grown bold by reason of plenteous food, he became venturesome, and made for that gloomy abyss, bent upon searching its recesses thoroughly. Boldly he swept between the immense bastions that guarded it

and with a swift upward thrust of his broad horizontal tail went headlong down, down, down. Presently he saw amidst the outer darkness a web of palely gleaming lines incessantly changing their patterns and extending over an area of a thousand square yards. They centred upon a dull ghastly glare that was motionless, formless, indescribable. In its midst there was a blackness deeper, if possible, than that of the surrounding pit. Suddenly all that writhing entanglement wrapped him round, each clutching snare fastening upon him with innumerable gnawing mouths as if to devour him all over at once. With a new and even pleasant sensation thrilling along his spine the young leviathan hurled himself forward at that midmost gap, his powerful jaws clashing and his whole lithe frame upstrung with nervous energy. Right through the glutinous musky mass of that unthinkable chimæra he hewed his way, heeding not in the least the wrenching, sucking coils winding about him, and covering every inch of his body. Absolute silence reigned as the great fight went on. Its inequality was curiously abnormal. For while the vast amorphous bulk of the mollusc completely dwarfed the comparatively puny size of the young cachalot, there was on the side of the latter all the innate superiority of the vertebrate carnivorous mammal with warrior instincts transmitted unimpaired through a thousand generations of ocean royalty. Gradually the grip of those clinging tentacles relaxed as he felt the succulent gelatinousness divide, and with a bound he ascended from that befouled abysmal gloom into the light and loveliness of the upper air. Behind him trailed sundry long fragments, *dissecta membra* of his late antagonist, and upon these, after filling his lungs again and again with the keen pure air of heaven, he feasted grandly.

But in spite of the new inspiring sense of conscious might and ability to do even as his forefathers had done, his loneliness was heavy upon him. For, like all mammals, the cachalot loves the fellowship of his kin during the days of his strength; and only when advancing age renders him unable to hold his own against jealous rivals, or makes him a laggard in the united chase, does he forsake the school and wander solitary and morose about the infinite solitudes of his limitless abode. And so, surrounded by the abundant evidences of his prowess, the young giant meditated, while a hungry host of sharks, like jackals at the lion's kill, came prowling up out of the surrounding silence, and with shrill cries of delight the hovering bird-folk gathered in myriads to

take tithe of his enormous spoil. Unheeding the accumulating multitudes, who gave *him* ample room and verge enough, and full of flesh, he lay almost motionless, when suddenly that subtle sense which, attuned to the faintest vibrations of the mobile sea, kept him warned, informed him that some more than ordinary commotion was in progress not many miles away. Instantly every sinew set taut, every nerve tingled with receptivity, while, quivering like some fucus frond in a tide rip, his broad tail swayed silently to and fro, but so easily as not to stir his body from its attitude of intense expectation. A gannet swept over him close down, startling him so that with one fierce lunge of his flukes he sprang forward twenty yards; but recovering himself he paused again, though the impetus still bore him noiselessly ahead, the soothing wash of the waves eddying gently around his blunt bow. Shortly after, to his unbounded joy, a noble company of his own folk hove in sight, two score of them in goodliest array. They glided around him in graceful curves, wonderingly saluting him by touching his small body with fin, nose, and tail, and puzzled beyond measure as to how so young a fellow-citizen came to be inhabiting these vast wastes alone. His tale was soon told, for the whale-people waste no interchange of ideas, and the company solemnly received him into their midst as a comrade who had well earned the right to be one of their band by providing for them so great a feast. Swiftly the spoil of that gigantic mollusc was rescued from the marauding sharks, and devoured; and thorough was the subsequent search among those deep-lying darknesses for any other monsters of the same breed that might lie brooding in their depths. None were to be found, although for two days and nights the questing leviathans pursued their keen investigations. When there remained no longer a cave unfathomed or a maze unexplored, the leader of the school, a huge black bull of unrivalled fame, gave the signal for departure, and away they went in double columns, line ahead, due south, their splendid chief about a cable's length in advance. The happy youngster, no longer a stray from his kind, gambolled about the school in unrestrained delight at the rising tide of life that surged tumultuously through his vigorous frame. Ah; it was so good to be alive, glorious to speed, with body bending bow-wise, and broad fan-like flukes spurning the brilliant waves behind him, ecstasy to exert all the power he felt in one mad upward rush until out into the sunlight high through the warm air he sprang, a living embodiment of irresistible force, and fell with a joyous crash back into the welcoming

bosom of his native deep. The sedate patriarch of the school looked on at these youthful freaks indulgently, until, fired by the sight of his young follower's energy, he too put forth all his incredible strength, launching his hundred tons or so of solid weight clear of the embracing sea, and returning to it again with a shock as of some Polyphemus-hurled mountain.

Thus our orphan grew and waxed great. Together, without mishap of any kind, these lords of the flood skirted the southern slopes of the globe. In serene security they ranged the stormy seas from Kerguelen to Cape Horn, from the Falklands to Table Bay. Up through the scent-laden straits between Madagascar and Mozambique, loitering along the burning shores of Zanzibar and Pemba, dallying with the eddies around the lonely Seychelles and idling away the pleasant north-east monsoon in the Arabian Sea. By the Bab-el-Mandeb they entered the Red Sea, their majestic array scaring the nomad fishermen at their lonely labour along the reef-besprinkled margins thereof, remote from the straight-ruled track down its centre on which the unwearied slaves of the West, the great steamships, steadily thrust their undeviating way. Here, in richest abundance, they found their favourite food, cuttlefish of many kinds, although none so large as those haunting the middle depths of the outer ocean. And threading the deep channels between the reefs great shoals of delicately flavoured fish, beguiled by the pearly whiteness of those gaping throats, rushed fearlessly down them to oblivion. So quiet were these haunts, so free from even the remotest chance of interference by man, their only enemy, that they remained for many months, even penetrating well up the Gulf of Akaba, that sea of sleep whose waters even now retain the same primitive seclusion they enjoyed when their shores were the cradle of mankind.

But now a time was fast approaching when our hero must needs meet his compeers in battle, if haply he might justify his claim to be a leader in his turn. For such is the custom of the cachalot. The young bulls each seek to form a harem among the younger cows of the school, and having done so, they break off from the main band and pursue their own independent way. This crisis in the career of the orphan had been imminent for some time, but now, in these untroubled seas, it could no longer be delayed. Already several preliminary skirmishes had taken place with no definite results, and at last, one morning when the sea was like oil for smoothness, and blazing like burnished gold under the fervent glare of the sun, two out of the four young bulls attacked the



orphan at once. All around lay the expectant brides ready to welcome the conqueror, while in solitary state the mighty leader held aloof, doubtless meditating on the coming time when a mightier than he should arise and drive him from his proud position into lifelong exile. Straight for our hero's massive head came his rivals, charging along the foaming surface like bluff-bowed torpedo rams. But as they converged upon him he also charged to meet them, settling slightly at the same time. Whether by accident or design I know not, but certainly the consequence of this move was that instead of their striking him they met one another over his back, the shock of their impact throwing their great heads out of the sea with a dull boom that might have been heard for a mile. Swiftly and gracefully the orphan turned head over flukes, rising on his back and clutching the nearest of his opponents by his pendulous under jaw. The fury of that assault was so great that the attacked one's jaw was wrenched sideways, until it remained at right angles to his body, leaving him for the rest of his life sorely hampered in even the getting of food, but utterly incapable of ever again giving battle to one of his own species. Then rushing towards the other aggressor the victorious warrior inverted his body in the sea and brandishing his lethal flukes smote so doughtily upon his foe that the noise of those tremendous blows reverberated for leagues over the calm sea, while around the combatants the troubled waters were lashed into ridges and islets of snowy foam. Very soon was the battle over. Disheartened, sick, and exhausted, the disabled rival essayed to escape, settling stone-like until he lay like some sunken wreck on the boulder-bestrewn sea-bed a hundred fathoms down. Slowly, but full of triumph, the conqueror returned to the waiting school and, selecting six of the submissive cows, led them away without any attempt at hindrance on the part of the other two young bulls who had not joined in the fray.

In stately march the new family travelled southward out of the Red Sea, along the Somali Coast, past the frowning cliffs of Sokotra, and crossing the Arabian Sea, skirted at their ease the pleasant Malabar littoral. Unerring instinct guided them across the Indian Ocean and through the Sunda Straits until amid the intricacies of Celebes they ended their journey for a season. Here, with richest food in overflowing abundance, among undisturbed reef-beds swept by constantly changing currents, where they might chafe their irritated skins clean from the many parasites they had

accumulated during their long Red Sea sojourn, they remained for several seasons. Then, suddenly, as calamities usually come, they were attacked by a whaler as they were calmly skirting along Timor. But never till their dying day did those whale-fishers forget that fight. True, they secured two half-grown cows, but at what a cost to themselves! For the young leader, now in the full flush of vigorous life, seemed not only to have inherited the fighting instincts of his ancestors, but also to possess a fund of wily ferocity that made him a truly terrible foe. No sooner did he feel the first keen thrust of the harpoon than, instead of expending his strength for naught by a series of aimless floundering, he rolled his huge bulk swiftly towards his aggressors, who were busily engaged in clearing their boat of the hampering sail, and perforce helpless for a time. Right down upon them came the writhing mass of living flesh, overwhelming them as completely as if they had suddenly fallen under Niagara. From out of that roaring vortex only two of the six men forming the boat's crew emerged alive, poor fragments of humanity tossing like chips upon the tormented sea. Then changing his tactics, the triumphant cachalot glided stealthily about just beneath the surface, feeling with his sensitive flukes for anything still remaining afloat upon which to wreak his newly aroused thirst for vengeance. As often as he touched a floating portion of the shattered boat, up flew his mighty flukes in a moment, and, with a reflex blow that would have stove in the side of a ship, he smote it into still smaller splinters. This attention to his first set of enemies saved the other boats from destruction, for they, using all expedition, managed to despatch the two cows they had harpooned, and when they returned to the scene of disaster, the bull, unable to find anything more to destroy, had departed with the remnant of his family and they saw him no more. Gloomily they traversed the battle-field until they found the two exhausted survivors just feebly clinging to a couple of oars, and with them mournfully regained their ship.

Meanwhile the triumphant bull was slowly making his way eastward, sorely irritated by the galling harpoon which was buried deep in his shoulders, and wondering what the hundreds of fathoms of trailing rope behind him could be. At last coming to a well-known reef he managed to get the line entangled around some of its coral pillars, and a strenuous effort on his part tore out the barbed weapon, leaving in its place a ragged rent in his blubber four feet long. Such a trifle as that, a mere superficial scratch, gave him little trouble, and with the wonderful recuperative power

possessed by all the sea-folk the ugly tear was completely healed in a few days. Henceforth he was to be reckoned among the most dangerous of all enemies to any of mankind daring to attack him, for he knew his power. This the whalers found to their cost. Within the next few years his fame had spread from Cape Cod to Chelyushkin, and wherever two whaleships met for a spell of 'gamming,' his prowess was sure to be an absorbing topic of conversation. In fact, he became the terror of the tortuous passages of Malaysia, and though often attacked always managed to make good his escape, as well as to leave behind him some direful testimony to his ferocious cunning. At last he fell in with a ship off Palawan, whose crew were justly reputed to be the smartest whale-fishers from 'Down East.' Two of her boats attacked him one lovely evening just before sunset, but the iron drew. Immediately he felt the wound he dived perpendicularly, but describing a complete vertical circle beneath the boat he rose again, striking her almost amidships with the front of his head. This, of course, hurled the crew everywhere, besides shattering the boat. But reversing himself again on the instant, he brandished those awful flukes in the air, bringing them down upon the helpless men and crushing three of them into dead pieces. Apparently satisfied, he disappeared in the gathering darkness.

When the extent of the disaster became known on board the ship, the skipper was speechless with rage and grief, for the mate who had been killed was his brother, and very dear to him. And he swore that if it cost him a season's work and the loss of his ship, he would slay that man-killing whale. From that day he cruised about those narrow seas offering large rewards to any of his men who should first sight his enemy again. Several weeks went by, during which not a solitary spout was seen, until one morning in Banda Strait the skipper himself 'raised' a whale close in to the western verge of the island. Instantly all hands were alert, hoping against hope that this might prove to be their long-sought foe at last. Soon the welcome news came from aloft that it *was* a sperm whale, and an hour later two boats left the ship, the foremost of them commanded by the skipper. With him he took four small barrels tightly bunged, and an extra supply of bomb-lances, in the use of which he was an acknowledged expert. As they drew near the unconscious leviathan they scarcely dared breathe, and, their oars carefully peaked, they propelled the boats by paddles as silently as the gliding approach

of a shark. Hurrah! fast; first iron. 'Starn all, men, it's him, d——n him, 'n I'll slaughter him 'r he shall me.' Backward flew the boat, not a second too soon, for with that superhuman cunning expected of him, the terrible monster had spun round and was rushing straight for them. The men pulled for dear life, the steersmen swinging the boat round as if she were on a pivot, while the skipper pitched over the first of his barrels. Out flashed the sinewy flukes, and before that tremendous blow the buoyant barrico spun through the air like a football. The skipper's eyes flashed with delight at the success of his stratagem, and over went another decoy. This seemed to puzzle the whale, but it did not hinder him, and he seemed to keep instinctively heading towards the boat, thus exposing only his invulnerable head. The skipper, however, had no idea of rashly risking himself, so heaving over his remaining barrel he kept well clear of the furious animal's rushes, knowing well that the waiting game was the best. All through that bright day the great battle raged. Many were the hair-breadth escapes of the men, but the skipper never lost his cool, calculating attitude. Finally the now exhausted leviathan 'sounded' in reality, remaining down for half an hour. When he reappeared, he was so sluggish in his movements that the exultant skipper shouted, 'Naow, boys, in on him—he's our whale.' Forward darted the beautiful craft under the practised sweep of the six oars, and as soon as she was within range the skipper fired his first bomb. It reached the whale, but, buried in the flesh, its explosion was not disabling. Still it did not spur the huge creature into activity, for at last his strength had failed him. Another rush in and another bomb, this time taking effect just abaft the starboard fin. There was a momentary accession of energy as the frightful wound caused by the bursting iron tube among the monster's viscera set all his masses of muscles a-quiver. But this spurt was short-lived. And as a third bomb was fired a torrent of blood foamed from the whale's distended spiracle, a few fierce convulsions distorted his enormous frame, and then that puissant ocean monarch passed peacefully into the passiveness of death.

When they got the great carcass alongside, they found embedded in the blubber no fewer than fourteen harpoons, besides sundry fragments of exploded bombs, each bearing mute but eloquent testimony to the warlike career of the vanquished Titan who began his career as an orphan.

FRANK T. BULLEN.

## SENSE OF HUMOUR IN WOMEN.

ONE welcomes with hearty pleasure a paper like that which appeared in the March CORNHILL on the above subject. It was eminently fair and moderate, and I for one readily assent to its conclusions. The *amari aliquid*, found in every cup however sweet, takes in this case the form of a fear that such a paper may give occasion to essays on the difference between wit and humour, perhaps the duller of all questions, except, of course, questions about the authorship of Shakespeare's poems. If I may be permitted to say a few words on the subject, I promise that I will not make distinctions, or generalise, or trace the rise and progress of humour in literature, or do anything needlessly irritating, in so far as I can avoid it. I may premise that if the salad and spinach story is the *Lapis Lydius* by which is tested a capacity for humour, then I am utterly destitute of that quality. I think the story incredible and disagreeable; and such little point as it has could be better brought out in many other forms. I admire women for not being amused by such a tale; and I am convinced that it is their superior refinement and sympathy with imagined distress which prevents them from laughing at a man pursuing his hat or trying to bring back to shape an umbrella which the wind has turned inside out. 'Nothing,' said Goethe, 'is more significant of a man's character than what he finds laughable.' Certainly nothing is more significant of his culture. Most men would endure more patiently the reputation of being unable to tell the truth than of being unable to see a joke. Every man thinks he can see a joke, and every gentleman thinks he knows a good bottle of wine and a pretty woman when he meets them. It is a widespread delusion. Nothing is rarer than true discernment in all the three cases. It seems to me that the real difference between men and women as regards humour is that the latter are content to suppress their claim to the endowment in question. 'Rosamond,' says George Eliot in 'Middlemarch,' 'could say the right thing; for she was clever with that sort of cleverness which catches every tone except the humorous. Happily she never attempted to joke, and this perhaps was the most decisive mark of her cleverness.' I have met men who could not get through the duel

scene in 'The Rivals,' or the trial scene in 'Pickwick,' but whose lungs would crow like Chanticleer if one's hat was blown away, or one dropped one's umbrella in the mud. I have heard men tell the dreary tale how a cobbler, reading the motto *mens sibi conscia recti* over a rival's door, offered to the public men's and women's *sibi conscia recti*. I have been myself accused of having no sense of humour because I submitted that that was a dismal attempt at humour and 'most tragical mirth.' I have met men and women (but more men) who could see no humour in Lewis Carroll or in Edward Lear. I cannot see the slightest reason for ascribing to women an inferior appreciation of humour. On the other hand, I am inclined to believe that in the highest kind of humour in English literature a woman occupies a very pre-eminent position indeed.

It was a woman who reminded us that 'a difference of tastes in jokes is a sore trial to the affections.' And it is to that woman that my thoughts have always turned when I have asked myself who was the most lineal and genuine descendant of Shakespeare as a humourist. Shakespeare gives us the most perfect examples of wit, as in the rapier-play between Benedick and Beatrice; of humour, when Dogberry instructs the watch, and when the Gravedigger chops logic with Hamlet; and of both combined, as in the scene where Falstaff enacts in succession the parts of the King and of the Prince. In all these and other triumphant sallies of the master mind into the more fantastic regions of its boundless domain, it will be perceived that, amid infinite variety, there is one quality common to all the scenes—the fact that the humour is just as tickling now as it could have been when first heard or read. There is nothing which depends for its point on the sixteenth century, and would be blunt in the nineteenth or twentieth. It has its source in fundamental qualities in our nature, and is almost, if not absolutely, unconditioned by considerations of time and place. The mental gropings of Dogberry, the counterfeit logic of the Gravedigger, and the sham dignity of Falstaff are illustrated by almost daily experience. Nor does it appear that the ordinary uneducated, or ill-educated, reason and sanity of to-day is more capable than it was in Shakespeare's time of 'a happiness' in holding the thread of an argument or grasping the significance of an illustration. The last-mentioned defect has always been characteristic of the average man, the 'man in the street,' as we are now fond of calling him. Aristotle more gracefully styled him *ὁ φρόνιμος*.

The very oldest joke in the earliest jest-book (of which a somewhat recent number of the *Strand* gave a very interesting account with facsimile reproductions) tells how one who could not solve some question turning on 'what relation was Dick to John,' incurred renewed humiliation, through misapprehension of the function of illustration, when a kind friend tried to throw light on the difficulty by means of an instance taken from the circle of their common friends. Again and again the same theme has supplied the point of a jest, and it does so still in subtle disguises.

Now it has seemed to me that of all English writers one shows conspicuously and pre-eminently this Shakespearean quality of humour. And she is a woman. Or, rather, 'she was a woman; but, God rest her soul, she's dead.' The humour of George Eliot is as fundamental as Shakespeare's. It has its source in the axioms of geometry, the laws of thought. Let me illustrate my meaning. A must be either equal to B, or greater than B, or less than B. Here is a passage in which a person essentially *φρόνιμος*, especially about horses, has declared the contradictory of this proposition. According to him, A can be greater than, less than, and equal to, B.

Fred Vincy, in 'Middlemarch,' is going to the fair at Houndsley, bent on selling his horse to meet a pressing claim. He is accompanied by Bambridge the horse-dealer and Horrocks the vet, whose genuine opinion of the value of his horse he wishes to gain indirectly. This was the last thing likely to be extracted from such eminent critics. Moreover, Bambridge was desirous of buying the horse himself, if, of course, he could have it at a quite inadequate price:—

"You made a bad hand at swapping when you went to any one but me, Vincy. Why, you never threw your leg across a finer horse than that chesnut, and you gave him for this brute. If you set him cantering, he goes on like twenty sawyers. I never heard but one worse roarer in my life, and that was a roan; it belonged to Pegwell, the corn-factor; he used to drive him in his gig, seven years ago, and he wanted me to take him, but I said, "Thank you, Peg, I don't deal in wind instruments." That was what I said. It went the round of the country, that joke did. But, what the hell! the horse was a penny trumpet to that roarer of yours."

"Why, you said just now that his was worse than mine," said Fred, more irritable than usual.

"I said a lie then," said Mr. Bambridge emphatically. "There



wasn't a penny-piece to choose between 'em.'" The passage seems to me to have in it an admirable humour, and a kind of humour as independent of time and place as that of Shakespeare. Our other novelists, from Fielding, and still more our dramatists, have displayed a tendency to make their humour take the form and pressure of the age—an increasing tendency, as may be observed in the case of the most modern drama, that of Pinero and Jones, the humour of which—excellent in its kind—is essentially dependent on the eccentricities of the world of to-day.

One cannot but think about Dogberry's views as to the place of reading and writing in the history of thought, and their automatic source as compared with physical advantages, when one hears the views of Tom Tulliver's drill-master, who had been an old Peninsular soldier, and who feels a profound contempt for histories of the War:—"On less personal matters connected with the important warfare in which he had been engaged, Mr. Poulter was more reticent, only taking care not to give the weight of his authority to any loose notions concerning military history. Any one who pretended to a knowledge of what occurred at the siege of Badajos was especially an object of silent pity to Mr. Poulter; he wished that prating person had been run down and had the breath trampled out of him at the first go-off, as he himself had—he might talk about the siege of Badajos then!"

Mr. Brooke in 'Middlemarch' is an admirable specimen of a good man struggling with logic. He has advantages over Dame Quickly in education; but he is as incapable as she is of treading the narrow path which lies through the major and minor to the conclusion. But nowhere are the struggles of the illogical mind more clearly displayed than when it is confronted with an illustration:—"That's the fault I have to find wi' you, Bessie," says Mr. Tulliver in 'The Mill on the Floss' to his wife; "if you see a stick in the road you're allays thinking you can't step over it. You'd want me not to hire a good waggoner 'cause he'd got a mole on his face."

"Dear heart!" said Mrs. Tulliver, in mild surprise, "when did I ever make objections to a man 'cause he'd got a mole on his face? I'm sure I'm rether fond o' the moles; for my brother as is dead and gone, he'd a mole on his brow. But I can't remember you ever offering to hire a waggoner with a mole, Mr. Tulliver. There was John Gibbs' [here the logical confusion becomes worse confounded] 'hadn't a mole on his face no more nor you have, an' I was all for having you hire *him*; an' so you did hire him, an' if

he hadn't died o' th' inflammation, as we paid Turnbull for attending him, he'd very likely ha' been driving the wagon now. He might have a mole somewheres out o' sight, but how was I to know that, Mr. Tulliver?'

'No, no, Bessy; I didn't mean justly the mole, I meant it to stand for summat else; but niver mind—it's puzzling work, talking is.'

The farriers, butchers, wheelwrights, and tailors who met at the Rainbow in 'Silas Marner' are as irresistibly laughable as the hinds in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream;' in both we are captivated by a droll limitation of the capacity to think, or a contrast between a marked capacity to think and a very impotent vehicle in the way of expression, as when Silas Marner is described, with a helpless attempt at mitigating a harsh judgment, as being '*partly* like a bald-faced calf.' Contrast those peasants with the peasants of Thomas Hardy, who are also portrayed with great literary skill, and the difference of method will at once be seen. The latter are amusing mainly as illustrating modern Wessex, the former because they are such as the rustic ever was and ever must be, whether he be in ancient Athens or modern England. Among the jolly company who met at the Rainbow was one whose wife, Dolly Winthrop, made an important contribution to the question about woman's sense of humour. She was patiently tolerant of her husband's jokes, 'considering that men would be so.' If all women followed her example, perhaps we should not hear much more of the lack of the sense of humour in women. She viewed the sterner sex 'in the light of animals whom it pleased Heaven to make troublesome, like bulls or turkey cocks.' Men puzzle her: 'I don't eat such things myself, for a bit o' bread's what I like from one year's end to the other; but men's stomichs are made so comical they want a change—they do, I know, God help them.'

But she is ready sometimes to accord them a qualified commendation: 'I've seen men as are wonderful handy wi' children. They are awkward and contrairy mostly, God help them; but when the drink's out o' them they aren't unsensible.'

Mrs. Poyser in 'Adam Bede' and Dolly Winthrop coincide largely in their views about the government of the world. They regard the doings of Providence as being by no means above criticism: 'As for the weather,' observes Mrs. Poyser, 'there's One above makes it, and we must put up wi' it; it's nothing of a plague to what the wenches are.'

Dolly, it will be observed, mitigates her strictures on Providence by a judicious use of the plural: 'I wouldn't speak ill o' this world, seein' as Them put us in it as knows best; but what with the drink and the quarrelling, and the bad illnesses and the hard dying, as I've seen times and times, one's thankful to hear of a better.'

George Eliot's humour, like Shakespeare's, is based on the primary elements of human nature and its pathetic incongruities and imbecilities. Her great precursors have been, in the modern world, Shakespeare, Molière, and Cervantes. The humourist most contrasted with her is Charles Dickens, who, like Rabelais, seeks his material in the exceptional and accidental circumstances of life. The humour of Dickens is already beginning to cease to appeal even to his own countrymen. That of Shakespeare is as fresh as ever. And I feel convinced that we may claim the same lasting qualities for the humour of George Eliot. But I have no doubt that her lack of this sense was often deplored when the Bambridges of her day treated the company to their sly allusions to mothers-in-law and to attorneys, or set the table on a roar with the description of a man coming home drunk to his wife.

It is only in her abiding consciousness of a moral purpose that the humour of George Eliot stands aloof from that of Shakespeare. In everything else she is quite Shakespearean. She notices the weaknesses and eccentricities of individual characters. But they are rather the objects of pity than of laughter. She never goes out of her way, like Dickens and Balzac, to look for the eccentric in human nature, because in human nature itself she finds the very essence of incongruity. Her instinctive insight and rare dramatic power would have been thrown away on the creation of freaks and anomalies—'twists and cranks' as she calls them; but her types are as lifelike as if they were portraits of individuals. It is only in 'Theophrastus Such' that she abandons her method, and there her humour deserts her; wit we have, but it is vitriolic and bites like an acid. In the Dodson sisters—those matchless types of English provincial life—who can point to a touch of the grotesque or of caricature? They have their peculiarities, each her own. Mrs. Glegg is stingy and dictatorial; Mrs. Pullet is proud of her physical ailments, which she looks on as a proof of gentility; Mrs. Tulliver, whom Mr. Tulliver 'picked from her sisters o' purpose 'cause she was a bit weak like,' sees in her husband's ruin nothing so tragic as the loss of her china and table linen. They all think the traditions of the Dodson family

the final standard of rectitude. But they never overstep the modesty of nature. Not one of them would have asked, like Pecksniff, to be reminded especially to include in her evening prayers a person who had done her a wrong. Here is a very characteristic specimen from 'The Mill on the Floss':

'There's ways o' doing things,' said Mrs. Glegg, 'worse than speaking out plain, Mr. Glegg. I'd sooner you'd tell me to my face as you make light o' me, than try to make as everybody's in the right but me, and come to your breakfast in the morning, as I've hardly slept an hour this night, and sulk at me as if I was the dirt under your feet.'

'Sulk at you,' said Mr. Glegg, in a tone of angry facetiousness. 'You're like a tipsy man as thinks everybody's had too much but himself.'

'Don't lower yourself with using coarse language to me, Mr. Glegg. It makes you look very small, though you can't see yourself.'

Finally, Mrs. Glegg rings the bell.

'Sally,' she said, 'light a fire upstairs and pull the blinds down. Mr. Glegg, you will please order what you like for dinner. I shall have gruel.'

Accordingly, she spends most of the day in her room with Baxter's 'Saints' Everlasting Rest' open in her lap. She always keeps that work open before her on Sundays, and when she is in an unusually bad temper, but never reads a word of it. This suggests another view in which Shakespeare and George Eliot thoroughly coincide—their appreciation of the extreme illiteracy of the lower and lower-middle classes. I have already referred to Dogberry's views about the importance of reading and writing, and Christopher Sly represents the attitude of the masses towards the drama:—

*First Serv.* 'My lord, you nod; you do not mind the play.'

*Sly.* 'Yes, by St. Anne do I. A good matter surely: comes there any more of it?'

*Page.* 'My lord, 'tis but begun.'

*Sly.* "'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady; would 'twere done!'

In the very same spirit Luke, the miller, in 'The Mill on the Floss,' has a poor opinion of reading, considering that 'There's fools enoo, and rogues enoo, wi'out lookin' i' books for 'em;' and refuses with some asperity Maggie's suggested loan of some of

her favourite authors. Tom Tulliver's views about literature are very little more refined, and Rosamond Vincy, in 'Middlemarch,' though she was the very paragon among Mrs. Lemon's pupils, is secretly surprised when Lydgate looks with scorn on the 'Keepsake.'

'Mr. Plymdale [one of the good matches in "Middlemarch," though not one of its leading minds] was in *tête-à-tête* with Rosamond. He had brought the last "Keepsake," the gorgeous watered-silk publication which marked modern progress at that time; and he considered himself very fortunate that he could be the first to look over it with her, dwelling on the ladies and gentlemen with shiny copperplate cheeks and copperplate smiles, and pointing to comic verses as capital and sentimental stories as interesting. . . . But now Lydgate came in. . . . Mr. Plymdale smiled nervously while Lydgate, drawing the "Keepsake" towards him, gave a short scornful laugh and tossed up his chin, as if in wonderment at human folly. "I wonder which would turn out to be the silliest—the engravings or the writings here," said Lydgate, while he turned over the pages quickly, seeming to see all through the book in no time, and showing his large white hands to much advantage, as Rosamond thought.

"There are a great many celebrated people writing in the 'Keepsake,' at all events," said young Plymdale, in a tone at once piqued and timid. "It is the first time I have heard it called silly."

"I think I shall turn round and accuse you of being a Goth," said Rosamond, looking at Lydgate with a smile. "I suspect you know nothing about Lady Blessington and L. E. L." Rosamond was not herself without relish for "Keepsakes," but she did not readily commit herself by admiration, and was alive to the slightest hint that anything was not, according to Lydgate, in the very highest taste.'

Mr. Macey, the veteran parish clerk in 'Silas Marner,' who is looked up to by the company in the 'Rainbow' as a great authority on literature, gives us a delightful specimen of the dimensions of the rural knowledge of books and of its outlook on the world:—

'He came from a bit north'ard, so far as I could ever make out. But there's nobody rightly knows about those parts: only it couldn't be far north'ard or much different from this country, for he brought a fine breed o' sheep with him, so there must be pastures there, and everything reasonable.'

In pointing out Shakespearean qualities in George Eliot, I

have referred to the absence of those qualities in the humour of Dickens, which depends on peculiarities characteristic of persons, places, and periods, or else on extravagant eccentricity characteristic of no time, locality, or individuality. But it never depends on the general conditions of human nature. His elastic spirits and exuberant vitality made his earlier works something unique in literature, but each year was drawing away the sources of laughter. In 'Our Mutual Friend' we have, it is true, in Silas Wegg, some of the old vein still unexhausted, as when he appeals to an unnamed 'Irish gen'leman as was a judge of trestles,' and states that he pronounced the trestles for which he was claiming compensation to be beyond price. It always seemed to me that there was great humour in his appeal to an Irish gentleman. An Irishman often is, or claims to be, a connoisseur in various matters, and besides, he is too remote for easy verification of an ascribed judgment. But how tiresome is the repeated reference to the Veneerings' grave and dignified butler as the Analytical Chemist! That the creator of Sam Weller, Mrs. Gamp, Dick Swiveller, Captain Cuttle, and Micawber should think it funny to make Rogue Riderhood, having described two persons as The Governor and 'Tother Governor, then designate a third as 'Totherest Governor—this seems to me to be truly melancholy. But let us take Dickens at his best; let us take a passage recently selected by an admirer as full of his most characteristic humour:—

'I knows a lady, which her name, I'll not deceive you, Mr. Chuzzlewit, is Harris, her husband's brother bein' six foot three, and marked with a mad bull in Wellington boots upon his left arm, on account of his precious mother having been worried by one into a shoemaker's shop when in a sitiuation which blessed is the man as has his quiver full of sech, as many times I've said to Gamp when words has roge betwixt us on account of the expense—and often have I said to Mrs. Harris, "Oh, Mrs. Harris, ma'am, your countenance is a angel's." Which but for pimples it would be.'

Here we have overflowing fun, but no insight into human nature; only farcical exaggeration and burlesque; and the theme is as outworn as the mother-in-law, the attorney, and the curtain lecture. This kind of humour will not stand the test of time; that of Shakespeare has already done so, and, if I do not quite misconceive it, that of George Eliot will.

R. Y. TYRRELL.

### *THE SLUGGARD AMONG THE ANTS.*

'WHY is it impossible?' asked the Professor. 'Have I not proved to you that everything has been evolved from the same primordial substance? Then why should man have become supreme? Why should he have beaten every other animal on the face of the earth? Simply, my dear sir, because he happened, by pure chance, to be the first animal to stand upright and use his hands. How did he become the first animal to stand upright? Why, accident, pure accident again. There is absolutely no reason, I tell you, why quadrupeds should not have been invertebrate, and insects vertebrate. Why should not an ant have had an internal skeleton, and flesh and blood, like those of the higher animals? Why should man not have had a symmetrical nervous system, an external calcified skeleton, and jointed limbs? Accident, I say.'

I heard the Professor's voice go droning on, becoming fainter and fainter until I lost it altogether. I was awakened by a hand on my shoulder and a high shrill voice crying: 'Come! You are not listening. Wake up!'

I opened my eyes and stared in astonishment at my surroundings. I was seated in a large circular room, and before me stood a most remarkable creature. In size, in clothing, and in the fact that he stood upright, he resembled a human being; but his body was divided by an extremely small waist, his legs were remarkably thin and had two knees each, he had two pairs of arms one below the other, and his head, which surmounted a short thick neck, was unlike any head I had ever seen or imagined before. It was rather wider at the base than at the top; the flesh was of a rich chestnut tint, the eyes huge, black, and piercing, each made up of innumerable little eyes, and the mouth vertical instead of horizontal. He had no ears, and in place of a nose there were two beautiful silken horns, or antennæ, which were folded back over the head, except when the creature spoke; then they darted straight out and pointed at me.

As I looked at this creature standing in front of me, I discovered that I was also looking through the window to my right, at the sofa on my left, and at the ceiling above me. I leaped to



my feet and stared at myself in the looking-glass—it was as I had suspected: I was exactly like my companion, except that my eyes were, if possible, still blacker, and my hair was of a different colour.

‘When you’ve done jumping about and admiring yourself, Cuthbert,’ said my companion, ‘I should like you to point out why you consider them lacking in intelligence. Look here!’

I followed him to a small glass case, wherein was a host of minute creatures of the shape of human beings, running about on all fours and burrowing in the little sand heap placed for their convenience. They appeared to be covered with a shell-like substance, and had it not been for their human form, which was absolutely undeniable when seen through a magnifying glass, I should have taken them for insects; and this at the first glance had seemed more probable from the fact that many of them possessed wings.

‘Look at the little idiots running about with their silly cocoons,’ I found myself saying, ‘and there are two pulling at opposite ends of a bit of dirt in a perfectly pointless way. And yet you say they can talk to each other!’

‘I didn’t. I said they communicated probably by the sense of touch,’ answered my companion. ‘Here, see what Dibs the great authority says:

“The man is far superior in intelligence to the rest of the quadrupeds. A description of all their habits and mental powers would fill volumes. Men certainly have some means of communicating with each other; they unite for work and even for play. They recognise their fellow men after months of absence and feel some attachment one for another. They build houses, clean them, close the doors at night and post sentries. They make roads and tunnels; they collect food for the community, and when an object too large for entrance is brought to the nest, they enlarge the door and afterwards build it up again. They keep cows and milk them, as we milk aphides. They go out to battle in regular bands and freely sacrifice their lives for the common cause. They emigrate according to a preconcerted plan and they capture slaves. And yet the whole of their brain is to us a scarcely appreciable quantity.”

‘So much for old Dibs. Well, my point is, if there’s anything in evolution, why shouldn’t they be in our place and we in theirs, eh? Accident, I say. Now where are you?’

But I was so much occupied in testing the capabilities of my compound eyes, my antennæ and extra pair of arms, that I did not answer.

'You are getting horribly bored, I see, old ant,' said my companion. 'Let's go down. Tea ought to be ready soon. You haven't seen the others yet, have you?'

He opened a door and we found ourselves on a large circular landing, from which we descended by a winding staircase to the ground floor. Here we entered another circular room and were welcomed by two more of the strange race, to which I seemed now to belong. These were sisters of my companion, whom they called Henry; the elder, Juliet, was a brunette, that is to say of a dark red complexion with dark hair, and her antennæ were of surprising beauty. Olivia, the younger, had light hair and a bright yellow skin; she was considered a great beauty by the amorous young ants of the other sex. The lady ants appeared to think her too forward, and said that her antennæ were not large enough for true beauty. I myself was yet too little accustomed to a vertical smile to consider myself a judge, but she seemed to me to have plenty of good nature and an inexhaustible fund of humour. We were joined soon after our entrance by their mother, and the tea, which we drank from cups having a long spout like an oil-can. By virtue of my additional pair of arms, I succeeded in holding my own cup, filling up the teapot for Mrs. Tenny, and handing cake to Juliet and Olivia, all at the same time.

After tea we played lawn tennis. We had two rackets each and the server served two balls simultaneously, which made the game very fast and exciting.

When our game was over, it was time to dress for dinner. As I stood in front of my glass adjusting my tie, and smoothing my antennæ with a silk handkerchief, I could not help admitting that, for an ant, I was not ill-looking. My mouth had a proud and aristocratic curl at the lower end; and there was a look of resolution in most of my eyes, which marked me as an ant among ants. With a final glance at all my cuffs, I made my way downstairs.

The dinner consisted of mock water-beetle soup, fried leech with microbe sauce, curried sandhoppers, butterflies' eggs, and roast haunch of aphix, followed by fruit and coffee.

The utensils were much the same as those to which I was ac-

customed. The forks, however, had the prongs set at right angles to the stem, and the bowls of the spoons were narrow and deep in order to accommodate the shape of the mouth; the knives had two handles, and the glasses were made on the same principle as the teacups.

Our party was reinforced by a Captain Jay, who was apparently the accepted suitor of Juliet; he was a fine specimen of a soldier, tall, powerful, and almost black in complexion, with a thoroughly gentle-antly bearing and an air of authority peculiar to those who are in the habit of leading ants. He told us many tales of his last campaign; one poor fellow, in whom I was much interested, had lost three arms in saving a comrade, but was amply rewarded by receiving a medal and a bit of blue ribbon.

When we joined the ladies in the drawing-room, I had a good specimen of the musical powers of the ants. The additional pair of arms is very useful in this direction. The fair Juliet played a duet by herself on the piano, and the gallant captain performed very capably on the 'cello and violin at the same time. Mrs. Tenny in the meantime presented a pleasant and homely appearance, as she knitted a sock with one pair of hands and embroidered a tea-cloth with the other, her antennæ waving placidly in time to the music. Henry did not seem to care for music; he had retired to a cabinet, mumbling an apology, and was now busy writing two letters. Miss Olivia next let me choose a song from her portfolio; I chose two—'Oh, had I the Wings of a Turnip Fly,' and 'Ask no more,' both of which she sang with great sweetness. Then the Captain sang a comic song called 'Why don't you leave them on the Stairs?' This brought Henry from his corner, and he gave us 'The Wasp that played the Organ in the Street,' at which we all laughed very much. Finally Juliet and Olivia played a duet on the piano. It was a beautiful piece, descriptive of a mountain stream, which went diggle, diggle, diggle through fastnesses of stone, and ran right down into the bass and right up into the treble, and backwards both ways, dying away at last in one note—just like a mountain stream.

Then the ladies retired, and after smoking for a few hours we went to bed.

I was up betimes in the morning, and was standing on the balcony before my bedroom window, when I heard a voice saying:

'Good morning, Mr. Digglesworth.' I looked down and espied Olivia in the garden path.

'Good morning,' I replied. 'You are an early fly.'

'Won't you come down and let me show you the garden?' she said.

I ran downstairs and joined her. 'Isn't it glorious?' she began at once. 'Don't you love to hear the thrushes humming in the cherry trees? They say it is to be a good year for honey, by the way. And listen to the gnat in the larch and the ichneumons chattering on the roof! Come along, I have to feed the flies; you can carry the watering-can for me. Are you fond of insects?'

I followed my talkative companion to a large enclosure, divided up into pens. In these were some bird-like creatures with two legs and four wings. They were feathered all over, except on the legs, and a small patch round the eyes. A few were feathered down to the feet also.

'All the flies are mine,' said Olivia, as she bustled about, scattering food, 'and I make quite a fortune out of them. I send the eggs to market, except those I sell for setting, and I get prizes at shows too—quite a lot. This Spangled Meat Fly is a prize fly, and so's that, and oh! ever so many of them.'

'You must be an enterprising young lady,' said I.

'Any one could make flies pay if they took the trouble,' she replied. 'Most ants leave them to look after themselves, and of course they don't pay then. Well, what shall we look at next? Would you like to see the mites? I can hear Spot barking to come out. Bother! There's the breakfast bell; we must leave them till after.' And still chattering she led me into the house.

Henry was busy all morning and the ladies had shopping to do; so I sat out in the garden reading a novel which they found for me. It was called 'Cut from the Joint, or Two Ribs and a Shin Bone,' and was rather sensational in character. In the afternoon we went for a drive in a carriage drawn by two high-spirited centipedes, which got over the ground at a tremendous pace. The ants always use centipedes for driving, but they prefer to ride grasshoppers on account of their leaping powers; and they also go out flying on bees. This is one of the finest forms of exercise I have ever tried, though it is somewhat dangerous if the steed turns restive or refuses to come down. Henry told me that he was once flying on a bee when it shied at a church steeple and

bolted, and it was three days before he could pull it up and persuade it to drop in a field. On our drive we passed a group of ants who were watching an earwig dancing on its hindmost legs in a very comical manner; I noticed that the crowd kept its distance, although the earwig was secured by a stout rope and had his pincers muzzled. We were much troubled by swarms of sparrows, which got in our eyes and on our antennæ, and Mrs. Tenny was stung on the neck by a man, which had crawled up her dress. Men are a great nuisance in hot climates, I was told. The black man, which is the largest, is sometimes as much as half an inch in length, and is extremely pugnacious and blood-thirsty; the most troublesome, however, are the white men, which eat up whole dwellings. Though very small, they will destroy a staircase in a fortnight and bore their tunnels through every article of furniture in their path, no matter how hard the wood. It is almost incredible that a little thing like a man should do so much damage.

Some days passed away in idle amusements, tennis, picnics, boating, and riding on wheels, of which the ants are very fond. They use a machine with three wheels placed one behind another, and worked by a pair of pedals, and a similar contrivance for one pair of arms, the other arms being employed in steering. I had a very enjoyable time on the whole, but I began to see that I was thinking too much about Miss Olivia's antennæ, and I was glad to avail myself of the Captain's offer to take me into the bush for a few days. We set off by train for Alcara, whence we tramped to Smooka on the Squilli. Here we hoped to find plenty of cockroaches, woodlice, and wild snails, and we heard on our arrival that we might get a shot at a spider. We were up at five in the morning, and carrying a couple of guns each we rode our grasshoppers into the jungle. Some natives with spare ammunition accompanied us. After a ride of two or three hours we came on the tracks of oil-beetles and wild snails, and shortly after moved a snail, but could get no shot owing to the thick scrub. After a short circuit in search of the snail, we heard spiders trumpeting in the distance, and the natives ran up with the news that a large herd had just crossed an open space in the jungle. We sent on the Smookas, and rode on in the direction indicated. In about ten minutes we came on two enormous female spiders, which immediately made off. The Captain and I separated, each following a separate track, and in a quarter of an hour I came in

sight of a grand female, going ahead at an incredible pace. My grasshopper bounded ahead in three leaps of fully one hundred yards each, and I gave her a shot behind the second shoulder. I saw the wound in a good place, but we came on bad ground, which made it unwise to close. I let fly with my three remaining barrels and rode on through the high grass, until she suddenly turned and faced me in an open spot. She stood bellowing, with her great hairy legs bunched up under her. I reloaded, rode rapidly past her, and made a good shot exactly behind the first bladebone. For a moment she fell, and the next thing I knew was that I was going for my life with the spider in full chase and actually gaining on me. We had been going for several miles at a fearful pace. I expected my hopper to fall every moment, and the spider was within twenty yards, screaming loudly. I turned my head and saw her terrible jaws outstretched and her eight eyes gleaming with pain and fury. My grasshopper's legs gave way, I felt the swish of the poisoned pincers, and fell to the ground in a senseless heap.

When I came to life I was seated in my armchair before an empty grate. How I was saved I have never discovered, and the most curious circumstance in the case is that I had recovered my human shape. The Professor affects to treat my story lightly, either because the problem has baffled him, or from motives of professional jealousy. Perhaps the latter is the more probable explanation.

G. H. BODEN.

AN INTERNATIONAL EPISODE: SIXTEENTH  
CENTURY.

M. RENAN, in his charming 'Feuilles Détachées,' has given us his ideal of a library. It is not a public, it is a private, or semi-private, library. Like Carlyle, he seems to shrink from the commonalty which peoples the great public collections, and to desire a study dedicated to himself, in which he can feel assured of that *pleine possession de soi-même* which he very justly recognises as indispensable for spiritual production. True, he tells us of his discovery in the library at Saint-Malo, where, under layers of dust which testified to the virtual privacy of the place, he came upon the whole *apparatus criticus* requisite for his disquisition on Averroes. He confesses also that the Collège de France satisfies him; but there he enjoyed a suite of rooms apart, and the fact remains that his ideal is a private, not a public, home of study. He complains that no architect of modern Paris has even so much as imagined to himself the possibility of a *locataire lettré*, with the result that 'nos bibliothèques sont des cabinets noirs, des greniers où les livres s'entassent sans produire la moindre lumière.' Face to face with this distressing fact here is M. Renan's delightful dream of a study 'pour ces austères travaux. Une jolie maison dans les faubourgs d'une grande ville; une longue salle de travail garnie de livres, tapissée extérieurement de roses de Bengale; un jardin aux allées droites, où l'on peut se distraire un moment avec ses fleurs de la conversation de ses livres;' or, as the widest concession to common use which he could accept, this picture of some convent library, where the privacy is all but complete: 'Une abbaye du temps de Saint Bernard, perdu au fond des bois, avec de longues avenues de peupliers, des chênaies, des ruisseaux, des rochers, un cloître pour se promener en temps de pluie, des files de pièces inutiles où viendraient se déposer sur de longues tables les inscriptions nouvelles, les moulages, les estampages nouveaux.'

Very refined, very delightful, but for some temperaments *trop de luxe*. The Bengal roses would disturb me with their perfume, and by one of those magic transportations which scent is able to effect, I should be rapt away to the watertanks and



bosage of the Taj Mahal or to some Gulistân of the delicious East. I should no longer be present in the Inquisition chamber, nor should I hear poor Baldo Lupatino's answers to the Court. I should cease to share the wanderings of Dorotea, the heroine of this little story, nor should I feel with her for the loss of her red pelisse. The roses would master me, creating a world of their own in which I should be forced to live; they would hinder not help the work in hand.

This is doubtless a matter of temperament. M. Renan, and I suppose all students, seek solitude; '*car la solitude*,' he says, '*est bonne inspiratrice*.' But his solitude is the solitude of a paradise, not of the desert. He would hesitate to endorse the old Greek saying *εὐρητικὸν φησιν εἶναι τὴν ἐρημίαν*; the wilderness for him could hardly be the home of invention, of discovery. Yet for some it is so; the very aridity of a public library is stimulative.

But before I endeavour to set forth the advantages which the desert of a public library may offer to counterbalance the roses, the cloisters, the colonnades, the spacious ambulatory of M. Renan's dream, it is worth while just for a moment to point out a distinction between the home of the printed book—the library in its narrower, more modern sense—and the home of original documents, the Record Office, the Archive. For some reason or other the Archive will invariably be found more severe, more arid, austerer than the library. No one, I imagine, who has frequented both will deny this inherent difference of atmosphere. The severity of the Archive passes into the very furnishings of the place: plain deal tables, square legs, uncompromising chairs, as against the comparative luxury of a library, with its fittings of walnut or mahogany. By way of illustration compare for a moment the Search Room at the Public Record Office in London with the Reading-room of the British Museum; or again, the sunny, decorated chamber in the library of St. Mark with the grim Sala di Studio at the Frari.

Granted the difference between public and private libraries, the public library will be found to offer many peculiar attractions, which endears it to all who are born with a palate for such flavours. The company, to begin with, is a valuable stimulus, either of attraction or repulsion. There is something exhilarating in the play of a large machine; something restful in feeling that one is a part only, not the whole of that machine. I am not thinking now of vast cauldrons like the Reading-room of the British Museum, where the readers not merely read, but eat, sleep, and

make their toilette, but of such exquisite harmonious havens of rest as Duke Humphry's library in the Bodleian, the Marciana in Venice, the library at Weimar, or that lovely room in the upper town of Bergamo. The play of humanity about one is delightful, and in moments of repose, when the pen is laid down, this environment is more restful than the roses, for it is less aloof. There is no violent rupture in the sequence of mood; all the action is taking place in a region of which we ourselves are a part. How interesting are some of one's neighbours! How charming the unspoken friendship born of proximity and a common object! What revelations, too, of character in all the operations of a library, a very measure of nervosity which may be gauged by the rapidity or the pauses of the pen, the disposition of the books, the position of the ink-pot, the impatience or the calm of the procedure! Can I ever forget my fascinating companion of some three weeks, who was studying the '*Mécanique Céleste*,' of which he was himself such a splendid specimen. The wilderness and the stony place have their roses; there are springs in the desert.

Nor are humours wanting in a library. There arrived one day at a city famous for its classical codices a student from somewhere in the Sarmatian plain. Punctually as the library opened he presented himself at its door. In a quarter of an hour he was installed at his table with a rampart and a tower of all the manuscripts relating to his author piled in front of him. His hurry was presently explained by the arrival of another eager scholar, who demanded the very volumes now heaped before his rival. An obvious chuckle rippled down the bowed back of the first comer. But he did not know the ways of that city. At twelve o'clock came a sudden and deafening explosion, a rattle of the windows, as the midday gun was fired. The victorious student, with his mind intent to save his codices from the clutches of his competitor, sprang to embrace the pile, and he and they were laid upon the floor. This brought the sub-librarian on the scene, and the greedy collator was forced to disgorge a portion of his prey.

Episodes such as this are rarer in an Archive, where the atmosphere is apt to be sterner, more concentrated; though here, too, there are very genuine pleasures in the midst of arid surroundings. At the table next to mine there used to sit a genial old gentleman with spectacles and a bald head. He never spoke, but we knew each other quite well. One day he was obviously in difficulties. First came groans and grunts; then the spectacles were thrust up on the forehead—to no purpose; next he

rose from his chair and held the water-wasted document close to the window, now in one light, now in another; sat down again and took snuff loudly; presently he began talking to himself, but really addressing the room. 'Water,' he said, 'nothing but water. All soaked; all ruined; would wear out five pair of eyes.' Of a sudden he wheeled round almost fiercely upon me, snatched up the offending document, and flung it across. 'Look!' he cried. I rose, looked, commiserated, smiled, sat down. Who knows what rains of yester, yester year had baulked this student of to-day?

Dealing as one does in the Archives with unpublished, uncatalogued, and very often unexamined matter, relations with distant and unknown students may, and very likely do, become wide. For example, there are at least three people who are anxious to learn what became of Diasorinos, the scribe. You can never tell at what moment he may flash into view, and should any discovery be made with what satisfaction would the news be transmitted to Paris and to Oxford! I know of two, at least, who are eager to find out why Giorgio Valla got into trouble with the Council of Ten; and one in America lives in hope that Francis Bacon was once in Venice. And thus there is created a sympathy with unknown men and lands, a *secretum meum mihi et amicis*, a 'bastle-house' or 'barmekin' into which you may retire when the tide of common life runs boisterous or contrary.

But, further, to deal with original documents, to handle the very paper, to read the *ipsissima verba* which convey our knowledge, is a more absorbing occupation than to deal with books, which are in a sense twice removed from their creator. This is, I am aware, a merely material consideration; but Goethe urged that the material should be made to assist the spiritual, and it does so pre-eminently in an Archive. We are there as near to the life of the past as it is possible for us to get. The paper, the ink, the handwriting, all retain some aroma of reality which is missing in the printed page. It is virgin soil, too, that we are ploughing, and no one knows what the ploughshare may turn up to the light. The most startling clues may be discovered where least looked for, and then how fervent is the chase from one series of documents to another, how keen the pleasure of running the quarry to ground!

Reality, convincingness, vividness, these are the characteristics of study in an Archive; and our material nearness to the past has a very genuine effect upon the imagination. The naked truth, detailed as it is for no literary purpose, with no consideration of

art in its composition—a mere piece of actual life with all life's inconsequences—produces an effect superior to any that could be obtained by the most skilful master of *belles-lettres*.

But this fine aroma of veracity is too subtle to be confined; it evaporates in transfusion. Who can preserve the cry that rings from the depositions before the Holy Office? How can you convey the thrill of reality evoked by the sonnet of Lupatino, written in prison with a piece of charcoal taken from a brazier, whose fine black powder blows away even as we transcribe the words, or how present the lively emotions with which we find beneath our eyes designs for the meshes of the net in which the Rizzos were to be drowned? Graffiti and judicial archives are the storehouses of the most poignant emotions which we can gather from the past. But their flavour cannot be transmitted; their quality is a quality *quod demonstrare nequeo, sentio tantum*.

And yet one is constantly tempted to face the impossible, to endeavour to preserve the naïve flavour of some unvarnished story, met by chance in the course of other searches. And, though much of the actual simplicity must inevitably disappear in the process of translation, still some idea of how people lived and thought, some side-lights upon human life, may perhaps be gathered from the little romance which I shall now endeavour to relate.

The story begins with a despatch from the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, dated January 29, 1585—that is, 1586 of our style. 'Most Serene Prince,' writes Bernardo to the Doge and Senate, 'some days ago a cavass, obeying orders from the Pashas assembled in Divan, came to my house. In his company were a young man from Apulia and a boy. The cavass was charged to tell me that this young man, whom he styled a Roman Cavaliere, had complained to the Pashas on the following grounds. He says that he left Rome along with the boy and the boy's sister, both of whom were Turks, children of another cavass, who had been captured by the galleys of Florence and made slaves. He had bought them both, had married the girl, and was on his way with them to Constantinople, when they were all three arrested by order of the Venetian Governor of Budua. He himself and the boy escaped, but the girl, who was with child, remained a prisoner. The cavass added that the Magnificent Pashas were astounded that such a thing should have happened in the territory of the Republic, which was at peace with the Grand Signor. The young man here broke in and said that he not only complained because his wife had been detained, but also

because they had been deprived of one thousand sequins which they carried hid in a mattress, and had been subjected to many cruelties besides.

‘I replied to the cavass that I did not believe a word of the story, for I knew that your Serenity’s ministers were gentlemen who were incapable of acting unjustly. I said that I had no knowledge on the subject in question, but that I would write, not only to your Serenity, but also to the Governor of Budua for information; and in order that I might do so, effectively I desired further details of the event. Accordingly, I asked the young Apulian who he was; and out of a long rigmarole I extracted, with some difficulty, the confession that he had been head of the Papal police, that his name was Hector Salen, that he had fallen in love with this Turkish slave-girl, whose name in her native tongue was Giulsien, and her baptismal name Dorotea; that he had carried her off, along with her brother, whose Turkish name was Hussein, and his Christian name Augustino; that for love of her (but more likely because he had committed some crime) he had resolved to come to Constantinople and to make himself a Turk; as, indeed, he had done that very morning in the house of the Capadun Pasha, the High Admiral. He gave himself out as a gentleman, and took the title of Papal Cavaliere. I further extracted from him that when he was in Ragusa the people of the place, suspicious of his evil intentions, refused to let him and his companions depart towards Turkey. But he, pretending to set out on his return journey to Italy, got away to Castelnuovo, where he hired a boat to take them all to Antivari. They were landed, however, at Cattaro, where the Governor arrested them, but discharged them after a few days; and so they came to Budua. There they were again seized by the Governor. He, however, and the boy escaped; but his wife, owing to her condition, remained in durance.

‘It is an obvious lie about the money having been taken from them, for the boy and the young man from Apulia contradicted one another as to who was present at the alleged seizure. I noticed that the Apulian held a paper in his hand. This was the petition he had presented to the Pashas. I took it from him, and had it translated at once, and found that in it he said nothing about the money. This pack of lies let me see the true nature of the man, and I burst out on him, telling him that his own mouth had proved him to be a great scoundrel, and that I was perfectly certain that he had committed some crime, which was

the true reason why he wished to abandon his country and religion. I begged the cavass to repeat what he had just heard to the Pashas, pointing out that it was impossible for this fellow, a mere police officer, to have had all that money with him unless he had murdered some one. To this the Apulian made no answer, but went away quite upset and confused.

'The cavass, who stayed behind, begged me to restore the girl. As for the money, he was now convinced that it was all a lie. I answered that, although the bad character of this fellow was quite clear, yet as regards the girl I would write for information. And with that I dismissed the cavass.

'I sent at once to tell the High Admiral, for I saw that the Apulian counted much on his support as having been received into Islam in the Admiral's house.

'The following day my dragoman, while waiting to be admitted to Divan, was attacked by all the cavasses, who declared that this girl was a daughter of one of their order, and they united in demanding her release. The Pashas in a body sent to inform me that this arrest was contrary to treaty. My dragoman replied in the sense of my answer to the cavass, and promised that I would write for information; but Ferrat and Mehmet, Pashas, insisted that I should not send for information, but should order the immediate restitution of the girl to Salen. The dragoman assured them that I had no authority to give such an order, nor would I be obeyed if I did.

'I must tell you that the boy, though he confesses that he is called Augustino, denies that either he or his sister has ever been baptised. I do not believe that. I expect considerable trouble from this affair, as the Pashas support the Apulian on the score of religion, and the cavasses because the girl's father was one of their profession. I will take no steps till I hear from your Serenity.'

We find the result of this despatch in the order of the Senate dated March 14, 1586. It runs thus :

'To the Governor of Budua,—We are informed by our Ambassador in Constantinople that a certain Hector Salen, an Apulian, has arrived at the Porte. He gives himself out as a Papal Cavaliere, and complains that when he was at Budua with the children of a Turkish cavass, a boy and a girl, both of whom he bought out of slavery, the girl, who is his wife, was detained by you. The Pashas have addressed a vigorous remonstrance to our Ambassador on the subject, and you will, no doubt, have

heard from him. But we now send you express orders that, if the charge be true, and the girl has been detained by you or by any of your officers, you are to release her at once, unless you have weighty reasons to the contrary ; and you are to consign her, all her goods, and all the Apulian's goods, to the Turkish Cadi nearest to your jurisdiction. You will draw up, in duplicate, a notarial act of this surrender ; one copy you will send to our ambassador in Constantinople, and one to us. And this as you value our favour. But should you have grave reasons to urge against this step, then you are to continue the arrest of the said girl and all her belongings, and to refer your reasons to us, that we may consider what you are to do.'

But before these instructions could have reached Budua, the subject of all this commotion, Dorotea, had already left for Venice, as we learn from the following minute of March 20, which completes the tale of Dorotea's adventures, from her own lips :

'This afternoon their Excellencies received notice that the Turkish girl, whose detention in Budua was reported by the Ambassador at Constantinople, had arrived in Venice, and was on board a ship on the point of sailing for Apulia. Their Lordships ordered the Secretary Bonrizzo to send an officer on board and to convey the girl to the lodging of the Doge's Master of the Household, in order that her deposition might be taken. This was done. She was asked her name, who she was, what she was doing on board that boat, and where she was going. To which she replied : "I am the daughter of a Turk called Achmet, the cavass. My name in Turkish is Giulsien ; in Christian, Dorotea. My father was sent, about three years ago, to Alexandria to purchase sugar. He fell ill there, and his wife, my mother, poisoned him so that she might be able to return to Christendom. My mother was a Venetian, daughter of the late Messer Aloise Memmo, and was married to the late Messer Ottavio Barbarigo, who was sent as Governor to Sebenico. There he was captured and killed by Achmet the cavass, my father, who was then on a piratical expedition. This my mother told me. She was sent back from Alexandria to Venice by Messer Paulo Mariani, a merchant in Alexandria, and I and a younger brother came with her ; Mariani had already placed my elder brother in France. We three stayed two months here in Venice, and then went to Rome to be baptised."

'Asked, "Could you not be baptised here without going to Rome ?" she answered :



“My mother was advised to go to Rome, because she was told she could not be absolved from the murder of her husband except in Rome.”

“And what did you do in Rome, and where did you lodge?”

“We went to the Catechumens, and presented ourselves to the Superiors, and especially to Cardinal Serletto. There I stayed about four months, learning the Christian doctrine, and then I was baptised. Monsignore Bianchetti, Chamberlain to Pope Gregory, was my sponsor at the font. My younger brother was not baptised again, for he had already been baptised according to the Greek rite, at Corfu, on our way back from Alexandria. After I was baptised, Hector Salen, an Apulian from Molfetta, nephew of Signor Giacomo Salen, military engineer, took me to wife. It is a year and a half now that I have been a Christian, and I wish to remain so. The Pope gave me for dower the interest on two thousand ducats, and made my husband a cavaliere in the Papal Guards. While I was at the Catechumens, my elder brother came from France, but would not be baptised. At last, however, he was persuaded, and was baptised along with me, and then went away in service of a count, whose name and home I do not remember. I stayed in Rome with my husband for about six months, while my mother and younger brother went to Naples, and entered the service of the Viceroy's wife. My husband mortally wounded a lieutenant in the Pope's horse guards, and Cardinal Serletto advised him to leave Rome for a few days, to escape the fury of justice, and so we went to Loretto. From Loretto we pressed on to Ancona, and from Ancona to Ragusa, to wait for a passage on board a Venetian ship to Zante, where an aunt of mine lived. At Ragusa we met my elder brother, and there we stayed eighteen days; but, no ships passing by, we were advised to go to Cattaro. We embarked on board the galley, *The Seven Columns*, but as that did not touch at Cattaro, we landed at Ragusa Vecchia, and took a small boat to Cattaro, where we were placed in quarantine on account of the plague. When we secured our pratique, we stayed another day and night, and then set out for Budua. There my husband lodged me in the castle with a certain Pietro Greco, and he and my brother went off to buy fish and to do a little trading. But after nine days I heard from one of Budua that both of them had gone to Alassio and had become Turks.”

'She was asked if, when they left her, they had shown any signs of such an intention. To which she answered :

"My husband merely told me that, as there was no passage at present for Zante, he must go and make a little money, so as not to consume all that we had. He took away my rings, necklaces, chains, and ducats, and even my red pelisse. I never heard anything more of them. When I found myself deserted I begged the Governor of Budua to give me a passage to Venice, where I hoped to find my husband's father and his brother, who had taken their passage in an orange boat. I found neither one nor the other ; but I heard that in the choir of St. Mark's there was a singer, a certain Messer Bonifacio of Molfetta, my husband's cousin, and in his house I lived along with a woman who keeps house for him. And, finding a ship bound for Apulia, on the advice of Messer Bonifacio I took a passage on her."

'Asked why she wanted to go to Molfetta when she knew that her husband was in Constantinople, she said :

"I have no other home, so I resolved to go to my father-in-law, whom I know for a man of honour."

'Their Excellencies, having heard the above deposition, commanded the young person to be taken for that night to the house of the Chief Officer, and to be lodged with his women, but under strict guard, and with orders that she was to speak to no one till further instructions.'

The next day the Senate made the following decree :

'That the said Dorotea be placed in the Convent of the Penitents at the Giudecca, and shall stay there till further notice ; and that she be not allowed to speak to any one.

'That the most prominent Turks residing in this city be invited to appear before the Cabinet, and that, in their presence, Dorotea be asked to declare if she desires to be a Turk or a Christian. When she has announced her resolve to be a Christian, a memorandum of the facts be drawn up in Turkish, and signed by the Turks present, and that this be sent to our Ambassador in Constantinople, in justification of our procedure.'

And here the luckless Dorotea disappears from the scene. Whether she remained immured on the Giudecca, or found her honourable father-in-law in Apulia, or was restored to the arms of her ex-Papal guardsman, we shall never know.

HORATIO F. BROWN.

*POLYGLOT RUSSIAN SCANDAL.**AN EXPERIMENT IN TRANSLATION.*

Not very many years ago there was a round game much in vogue at suburban and middle-class tea-parties, in which the young men and maidens, seated in a circle, passed on in rotation, and in whispers, an anecdote, which had been set going by one of their number. On the completion of the series of transmissions, the final edition of the anecdote was compared with the original and much amusement caused by the variations and additions which had developed in the process. The game was called 'Russian Scandal' or 'Russian Gossip,' and certainly was not uninteresting. Popular it undoubtedly was, but with the question whether it owed its popularity to its edifying qualities or to the undoubted opportunity of arch confidence between sly Edwins and shy Angelinas, we are not here concerned. My reason for alluding to it at all is that here I seem to recognise the germ of the experiment in translation which it is the object of this article to introduce—an experiment which, so far as I am aware, has never before been made.

Let us suppose for a moment that we are in a position greatly to elaborate the aforesaid sport. Let us imagine that we have collected at our tea-party half a dozen Englishmen and half a dozen foreigners, the latter of six different nationalities. Further let us suppose that, of our half-dozen Englishmen, each is a master of one at least of the foreign languages so represented, and that each of our half-dozen foreigners is also a master of English. Let us now get our imaginary guests into a circle, alternating an Englishman with a foreigner, and start them at playing a sublimated game of Russian Scandal. The first Englishman whispers an anecdote in English to his foreign neighbour. The latter, in turn, whispers the same anecdote in his own language to his other English neighbour, and so on and so on, each receiving the story in one language and retailing it in another. At length the circle is completed and the original version is compared, step by step, with those which have passed

through the ordeal of translation and retranslation, and through the idiocratic brains of twelve different human beings.

Instructive and not unedifying the result would certainly be, unless, by chance, we should get all our guests declaiming their versions at one and the same time, in which case we should have a neat pocket edition of the Tower of Babel.

Now it has seemed to me worth while to play this game of sublimated Russian Scandal in an even more exalted manner, and with more deliberation than could be given to it in the space of half an hour or so by a cosmopolitan gathering such as that suggested above.

The old-fashioned game professed to be of some ethical value, as showing with what reserve a story bandied about from mouth to mouth should be accepted. In like manner our more elaborate experiment will act as a proper warning to those who glibly judge of the meaning and force of literary productions with which they are only made acquainted through the medium of the ordinary translator. At any rate, I think it can be claimed that the result given below is not unamusing. Whether we shall lay the lesson contained in the gilded pill to heart is perhaps not so certain.

The mode of procedure has been as follows :—

In the first place I have handed a four-lined English epigram to a Latin scholar, who has translated it into hendecasyllabics. I have then passed on the Latin version to a well-known public-school master, who has translated it into English verse of the same metre as the original. (It should be here remarked that only the *English* translations and retranslations have, for the sake of easier comparison, been required to be isometric.) I have then handed on the new English version to the translator of one of the most exquisite of French idylls, who, in consultation with M. Gaston Paris, has rendered it into French. The French version has then been handed to a very charming poetess (praise of whom would perhaps not well become me) who has given a third English version. This, in its turn, has been done into Greek verse by the best man of his year at Oxford. The Greek has again been Englished by an Irish journalist, and the new English version has been next rendered into Italian by a fellow-countryman of Dante engaged on literary work in London; whilst it, in turn, has found its translator in a poet bearing a name which is indeed one to conjure with. The German is the

outcome of a momentary relaxation on the part of a pen steeped in the immensities of Schopenhauer; whereas its English, as an offset, is the harvest of an interval snatched from its author's weekly office of chasing our 'loathed melancholy.' The Persian is rendered by a distinguished scholar of Cambridge University, whilst for its English transliteration I am indebted to the gentleman who, by a bold experiment, has perhaps made us more intimately acquainted with the essential qualities of Persian poetry than any other.

And I am fain to confess, looking at the series, which is now presented to the reader, that the members of my voluntary and temporary staff have one and all, to quote Lord Rosebery, proved that their 'capacity was congenial to the crisis.' Nor have I been (may I say it?) *disappointed in the dread* lest they would

Deep conceiv'd devices find  
Beyond my purpose and my ken.

And here perhaps an apology is necessary. It would no doubt have proved a veritable triumph if all my translators had neither added to nor detracted anything from the original, and if the final English version had turned out precisely on all fours with the first; but in that case we should, I think, have been oppressed by the perfection of workmanship rather than amused and instructed by its divagations. Strictly speaking, of course, we should always bear in mind what the great Jowett wrote on this subject. 'We hear people talk,' he says, 'of a "free translation" and a "literal" translation. This is a false distinction. There can properly be neither the one nor the other. A translation is only good and only to be called a translation when it exactly conveys in our language the feelings expressed in the foreign language. To translate from Greek is as great a work and requiring as much practice as to turn a piece of English into Greek.' This is clearly just and right. At the same time we here only profess to be playing a somewhat elaborate game, and hope to get some amusement out of it. Fortunately for us (and I say it with all apologies to most of those who have put their services at my disposal), it is due to human fallibility that our scheme has turned out as interesting as it has done. I say 'most of those,' for it will be observed that in one or two versions (I dare not say which) the author has been remarkably successful in producing a translation in the strictest acceptance of the term.

Surely, however, it was not altogether with disapproval that Swift declared that people

view

In Homer more than Homer knew.

A translation may be made with one of two objects, each of them legitimate. In the first we strive to reproduce, for the use of those who cannot read the original for themselves, a literal rendering, without modifying the matter or idiom of the foreign model. This is the scholar's ideal. In the second we strive to reproduce, and do not hesitate, if we can, to improve upon our text, as did Fitzgerald with Omar. This is the artist's ideal. Of course, in this last case we run the risk of destroying where we would adorn, but the exercise is legitimate so long as we do not profess to be translators of the straitest sect. We are of course strictly but paraphrasts.

'Lewis Carroll' was delightful on an analogous point. Asked by a little friend the significance of his creation 'The Snark,' he wrote:

'I am very much afraid I didn't mean anything but nonsense! Still, you know, words mean more than we mean to express when we use them. So a whole book ought to mean a great deal more than the writer meant. So, whatever good meanings are in the book I'm very glad to accept as the meaning of the book.' There was not much pedantry about Mr. Dodgson.

But to pass from the general to the particular. I feel another apology is due for having started the series with a quatrain of my own making. The excuse must be that it has the virtue of containing that useful figure known to all schoolboys as a *παρὰ προσδοκίαν*, and further that, being original, it can be guaranteed as unknown to any of those employed in the matter save the first, who turned it into Latin. This last consideration was obviously of chief importance. Otherwise we might never have been quite convinced that the variation in any particular translation or re-translation was not modified by previous acquaintance on the part of its author with the original. Our experiment, like poor over-worked 'Cæsar's wife,' must be above suspicion.

In one or two instances I have been presumptuous enough not to be satisfied with a new version, and have turned it over to be done elsewhere. Nor do I apologise for adversely criticising renderings of which I should perhaps have been vain enough if written by myself, for have we not Dr. Johnson for our authority

that 'You may scold a carpenter who has made you a bad table though you cannot make a table? It is not your trade to make tables.'

The result of the experiment I now give, reserving the few remarks which I have to make upon the different versions until they have been read and digested by the unbiassed reader.

1. *English.*

I heard that S. would write my 'Life'  
When I gave up my breath.  
I felt that this indeed would add  
A new delight to death.—G. S. L.

2. *Latin.*

Rerum Postumium simul mearum  
Accepi monumenta proditurum;  
Sic mecum loquor: inferas ad umbras  
Ibo funere delicatiore.—H. F. T.

3. *English.*

Your promise, friend, to write my 'Life'  
Shall soothe my latest breath;  
So introduced I shall not fear  
To hob and nob with death.—H. B. S.

4. *French.*

Mon nom devait, grâce à ton livre,  
Par le monde à jamais courir.  
Pour être sûr de toujours vivre  
Il ne me faut plus que mourir.—F. W. B.

5. *English.*

My name within thy book enshrined  
Shall now immortal be;  
Yet to attain such life, behold,  
Death is the penalty.—N. F. L.

6. *Greek.*

Ἀγγελίην ἡμῖν πρόην προσέπεμψε Βιάνωρ  
'Κῆν σὺ θάνης, θήσω σ' ἀθάνατον βιβλίῳ.'  
Φεῦ· χάρις ὡς ἄχαρις· πρὶν γὰρ γέρας ἐς τόδ' ἰκάνειν,  
Μοῖρα πελᾷ ζωῆς ἔκ με κομιζομένη.—H. H. H.



7. *English.*

Says Smith, 'I'll make you, in your grave,  
Immortal by my lyre.'  
O thankless boon ! if life I crave,  
Why bid me first expire ?—C. L. G.

8. *Italian.*

'Quando tu sarai morta,'  
Dice il poeta a Elvira,  
'Ti renderò immortal colla mia lira.'  
.  
.  
.  
Ed ella : 'Che m' importa ?  
La vita assai m'è cara :  
Dammi immortalità, pria d' una bara.'—F. R.

9. *English.*

'I'll make you, dearest, when you're dead,  
Immortal !' murmured I.  
'O why not now ?' the damsel said,  
'And then I need not die !'—W. T.

10. *German.*

'Mein Lied, geliebte, wenn dein Leben endet,  
Wird dich,' ich flüsterte, 'unsterblich machen ;'  
'Ach, wär' es jetzt,' sie sagte, 'so verwendet,  
Ich würd' den Tod in Ewigkeit verlachen.'—T. B. S.

11. *English.*

HE : 'Dear, in my song you still shall live  
Though under earth you lie !'  
SHE : 'Ah ! had you *now* that grace to give,  
I should not need to die !'—O. S.

12. *Persian.*

بگفتا ارچه زیور گل بمانی  
ترا باشد ز شعرم جاودانی  
بگفتم لطف تو گر نتد بودی  
نه عزرائیل جانم در ربودی

E. G. B.

*Persian transliteration.*

Metre.

0---10---10---

Biguftā, 'archi zīr-i gil bimānī,  
 Tu-rā bāshad zi sha'ram javidānī.'  
 Biguftam, 'lutf-i tū gar naqd būdī,  
 Na 'Azrā'il jānam dar rabūdī.'—W. L.

As I have said above, it will be noticed that the original quatrain contains that useful figure, a *παρὰ προσδοκίαν*, a form of joke much relished by the Greeks. To give Liddell and Scott's example, ἔχων ὑπὸ ποσσὶ—χίμετρα (where πέδιλα was expected), *i.e.* having on his feet—'chilblains' instead of 'sandals.' This is a peculiarly apt example for us, since 'Having on his feet sandals' is a regular stock phrase in Homer. So here we have a new *delight*, in place of the expected *terror*, which has, in these days, come to be the rather hypocritical attitude so widely assumed towards biography.<sup>1</sup> This attitude was no doubt generally assumed after Sir Charles Wetherell's caustic remark about Campbell's 'Lives of the Lord Chancellors,' which, by the way, is generally misquoted to Sir Charles's distinct advantage. He did not say they added 'a new terror,' but 'a new sting' to death.

There seems to be no English expression which is the exact synonym of this figure. It is not strictly a paradox, nor is it an anticlimax, of which latter,

Next comes Dalhousie, the great god of war,  
 Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Mar.

is the generally quoted example.

This last figure Addison declares, with what justice I cannot say, to have been unknown to the ancients. Certainly the origin of the *term* is Greek.

In our Latin version (No. 2) it will be seen that the 'contrary to expectation' point has disappeared altogether and, by the time the second English version is reached, the natural *fear of death* has become an admitted fact. We are, however, consoled for the

<sup>1</sup> An amusing variant of the idea is to be found in Lord Tennyson's Life. Dean Stanley one day remarked at lunch, 'Having to do with artists and sculptors about statues and busts of great men gives fresh cause to lament their death.'

loss of our original idea by the ingenious modification of the hyperbole. In the first version it was taken for granted that death was delightful. Otherwise a *new* delight added to it would have no meaning. Now, death is looked upon as, in itself, a fearsome thing, the dread of which will be largely discounted, if not altogether removed, by a suitable presentation to the King of Terrors.

Passing on to the French (No. 4), again we find ourselves confronted with a new development. The satisfaction at being introduced with due observance on the other side of the Styx now gives place to the gratification caused by the prospect of posthumous fame. In the English version (No. 5), however, this feeling of elation becomes considerably modified on mature consideration. 'Is not an immortality on paper but a poor return when the price to be paid for it is death?' the writer seems to say. In other words, 'Is the game really worth the candle?'

Then in the Greek (No. 6) and its English (No. 7) this feeling becomes greatly intensified, and the poor victim begins to protest loudly, using the rhetorical figure oxymoron with excellent result. This is at least a cruel kindness, a δῶρον ἄδωρον, he cries in effect, and he snaps his fingers in his biographer's face with 'A fig for your promised immortalising of me! Why, you are actually looking forward to my death so that you may do it! No, thank you! If it's all the same to you, I'll go on as I am!'<sup>1</sup>

It is curious to note, in passing, that the Greek *βίαναρ* has been translated into 'Smith' by C. L. G., who has thus unconsciously adopted the initial 'S.' used in the first quatrain.

In the Italian (No. 8) the most noticeable variation that we find is the changed sex of the victim. This has been brought about no doubt by the fact that 'Smith' in No. 7 proposes to compass the biographee's immortality by the use of his 'lyre.' As long as the 'Life' was to be written in prose, the assumption has been that the subject is a man. Now, however, that song is the medium, the translator naturally postulates a mistress, and Elvira supersedes the 'mere man,' until the close of the series.

It will be noticed that the final epigram of all is in Persian; but, my acquaintanceship with Oriental scholars being limited, I find

<sup>1</sup> A good example of the oxymoron occurred in a speech by Mr. Beerbohm Tree the other day, in which, referring to a notorious 'interview,' he said: 'The attack has been met by the theatrical profession at large with a splendid *outburst of contemptuous silence.*'

that, having got it into the language of Omar, it is quite another thing to get it out again in the form required. Perhaps some of my readers will try their hands at it, or, better still, pass it on to any Persian friend, who has not seen its forerunners in the series, to experiment upon.

In conclusion, it is, I think, not uninteresting to note that in our final English quatrain (I cannot answer for the Persian) we seem to have an echo of part of the beautiful eighty-first sonnet of Shakespeare:—

Your name henceforth immortal life shall have,  
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die;  
The earth can yield me but a common grave,  
When you entombèd in men's eyes shall lie.  
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,  
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;  
And tongues to be, your being shall rehearse,  
When all the breathers of this world are dead;  
You still shall live (such virtue hath my pen)  
Where breath most breathes—even in the heart of men.

GEORGE SOMES LAYARD.

*A VILLA IN A VINEYARD.*

THIS early morning<sup>1</sup> I could sleep no more: a mosquito had won through the curtains and either it or I must go. The ignominious remedy was much the simpler, and I came through my bedroom window, out upon the drawing-room roof. It was just after five; the sun sat flaring on the spurs of Vesuvius, turning the mountain from grey to angry purple, even as I watched; in the still air his crest of smoke stood straight on end. Every night a crimson gash glows and grows in the mountain side, to heal at dawn. And every night (while we have no moon) the bay is a blackness spangled with the lights of fishing-boats; but this morning it was the boats that lay black upon a golden sheen.

Some one asked me exactly where we are, but the man was a cricketer. I said that Naples was long-leg, Vesuvius long-on (well-round), Nisida point, Procida cover-point, Ischia extra cover, and Capri 'in the deep,' with a vengeance, some twenty miles over the bowler's head. Capo Posillipo is our square-leg umpire, but the bowler is a mere buoy.

In point of fact, the place is a vineyard, and the homestead in the midst of it we have taken for six months. It hangs on an angle of the cliffs, at their very edge, and from below looks a dizzier height than we find it. It is a house with a history. Lucullus built it, no less. It was his very own villa. And yet we are densely ignorant about Lucullus! He was, 'of course,' a Roman general of the Empire, but I cannot conquer the impression that he fought his battles with the dactyl and the spondee, and scanned his own lines oftener than those of the enemy. Catullus and Tibullus are my snare. A patron of the arts we know Lucullus to have been, and here are evidences. I look out of my study window into the green basin that was the general's private theatre. My landlord has unearthed a marble plinth, with Leda and the swan in still bold relief, clearly the property of his more illustrious predecessor. We have two ways down to the sea; and by one we pass the still standing walls of a villa of Virgil himself. There are other ruins, relics, associations, if one was learned enough to write about them. Perhaps the learning will come. Meanwhile I have a vague recollection of Lucullus at

<sup>1</sup> Last August.

school, as a man of war. But I am beginning to know him by a repute which I may say that I can check.

We have two ways down to the sea: the Virgilian way is for the most part a gradual descent by a dusty pathway through the vines; the other is precipitous and even more romantic. It is a secret stair to the water's edge, three-parts subterranean, two hundred and fifteen steps in all. It has not yet been used in a novel, to my knowledge, but its time may come. Ending, as it begins, in honest daylight, these steps land you at the mouth of a cavern containing every facility for a bloody dénouement; meanwhile you can undress there in luxury, and but for the rocks there would be no better bathing-place in the bay. This morning the water was as warm as milk, as invigorating as dry champagne. But the sunk rocks barked my nakedness, and either the weed that grows upon the rocks, or the marine mosquito which infests the weed, stung considerably. What matter? The faithful Fiorentina was astir when I clomb the two hundred and fifteenth step, and even her coffee was good to drink this morning.

Fiorentina is a poor cook, yet the best that we can get to come so far out of Naples, the only one who would tackle our lane and the daily journey to Posillipo for the *spesa*; and Fiorentina, we discover, had her reasons. She turns out to be a fortune-teller as well as a cook—it is to be hoped a better one. We understand that she practises her secondary (or primary) profession in the intervals of the *spesa*, or marketing. We know that she robs us in her good-natured, light-hearted way; but we are beginning to like Fiorentina in spite of her idiosyncrasies, which include a rooted objection to stays and shoes, and an open fondness for the wine of the vineyard. What we dislike, our one and only grievance, is the system of *spesa* which Fiorentina illustrates, and which is forced upon us by our distance from the shops. Not one of them will send. We might stew in the juice of our own grapes, but every crumb of our daily bread has to be fetched from afar.

One must not scamp Fiorentina. She is a woman of more than character; the charm of mystery is instinct in her untidy person and wild eyes. She has weekly interviews with her solicitor, on the head of some legacy, as far as we can make out. I have heard the jingle of money in her room. Yet the most valuable current coin of Italy is worth less than twopence. Has she a deep distrust of the paper currency? Is she such a wise virgin as all that? Coin in Italy! She is not free from education, Fiorentina. Only last night I found her writing with my pen and

ink, at this very desk. On the other hand, there is no quicker worker than Fiorentina; she polishes everything off in the morning, and retires to bed for the afternoon. She can boil an egg in ten seconds. You say ten minutes if you want her to give it three.

To me the crowning merit of our villa is its villino, three little rooms by themselves, the best of the three my den. It is remote from the house, and Fiorentina; never had man a fairer chance in fairer workshop. Vines look in at one window, and through the other smokes old Vesuvius, as though butter wouldn't melt in his crater. Both windows have the light-tight shutters of the country, and face east and west respectively, so that in summer I can have as little sun as I like, in winter as much. The mere morning is worth a long day in London; there are no interruptions; you can work in flannels, or your pyjamas, without fear of friend or enemy; and not before luncheon can you get your letters.

I said the *spesa* was our only grievance, but, with one of us at any rate, the letters are a worse. They may arrive any time between the middle of the day and the middle of next week. The postman is as bad as the shopkeepers, without their right; nothing will entice him to our door. Sometimes he leaves the letters with friends of ours on the shore, and we get them when we call, or our friends bring them when they call on us. Sometimes he has consigned them to a decrepit crone at the top of our lane, but never when we send up to see. Last Saturday he seems to have dealt our letters round like a pack of cards, and to-day (Monday) they are still creeping in, like stricken soldiers. Heaven knows how many have fallen by the way! Yet I am blamed for not correcting proofs. I have tried correcting the postman, but it is little use, and rather disagreeable. He is a splendid fellow, handsome, stalwart, but he weeps outright if you bully him, and his one excuse is subtle if not complete:

'Excellency! I have eight daughters . . .'

There is no more to be said.

These hot afternoons one may do worse than follow the example of the seasoned Fiorentina, and the couch in my study (when she does not borrow the cushions) affords a fairly satisfying siesta; but one fly in the room on such occasions is worse than any number in the ointment, to say nothing of my enemies the mosquitoes. There is no remedy against the latter.

Tea between three and four is indispensable in Italy, even more so than elsewhere, as it seems to us. And after tea, if there is still no sign of your letters and the three-days-old paper with



the latest cricket, you can always scribble for another hour or two, as I am doing now. But the serious delight of the day is close at hand, and from five to six o'clock you go down to the sea once more for the incomparable swim before dinner. Not this time by the subterranean stair, but through the vineyard and past Virgil's villa, without a thought of the poet or of his pious hero, though I fancy there is a passage of which one ought to think. I wish I could think of it at this moment, or knew where to borrow an *Æneid*. . . .

It is over, the great *bagno*, the exquisite evening bathe. We were in three quarters of an hour; we swam a quarter of a mile at least. Can nobody invent a cyclometer for the swimmer, a natatometer, or patent log? It is our only exercise out here in August. I am curious to know how much we 'do.' This bathing place is to the other what Lord's cricket-ground is to a pitch in Regent's Park: you are not for ever in danger of an unmerited bruise. Instead of the ubiquitous rock, you have the well-marked foundations of a Roman house, as easy to avoid as they are grateful to rest upon. It was glorious to-night! The sun was setting redder than he rose this morning, setting through rich grey clouds the colour of Ischia, but much farther north, even north of Nisida. Not since I came have I known it calmer; and the ripples ran rosy to your chin, as you swam against them, into that gorgeous west. So buoyant the wave! So soft the skies! So tender the dying light upon shore and sea! And there is neither cold nor heaviness in these summer waters; the body seems as light as the heart, gliding through them. Ah! hard to feel the burden of the flesh once more, even as you drag it, dripping silver, back to dull dry land!

But how good to climb home through the dusty vineyard, clean of body and soul, with such an appetite, and a mind at peace! Giuseppe is finishing among the vines; he has deep-set, twinkling eyes, and, since he missed his last month's shave, a chin that would scrub a floor. A Neapolitan of the Neapolitans, than whom no citizens have a less enviable name. In Naples, one gathers that you never know when a man 'has his knife in you,' until you see its point sticking out of your waistcoat. I don't believe it of Giuseppe, for one. With nothing to gain, he treats the humble tenant as though he were full lord of the vineyard, and off comes his hat as usual:

'Buona sera, eccellenza!'

'Buona sera, Giuseppe!'

E. W. HORNING.

## COLONIAL MEMORIES.

BY LADY BROOME.

## PART I.

Few people can realise how rapid is the growth of a colony when once it begins to grow. Like a young tree, after reaching a certain stage, it may seem to have attained its limit, and one often feels disappointed that more visible progress has not been made. But come again a little later, and you will find your sapling shooting rapidly up into a splendid tree. It was really growing, as it were, *under ground*; searching with its roots for the most favourable conditions. Perhaps there was a piece of rock to be got round before the good soil could be reached, but the little tree was covering that rock all the time with a network of roots so that it ceased to be an obstacle and was gathered up and assimilated with its growth. In the decade between 1880 and 1890 Western Australia was just in that stage, and the splendid young giant of to-day must have been growing underground then, though it was not much to look at as a colony. In those days we sadly called ourselves 'Cinderella,' but the Fairy Prince—responsible government—was not far off, and I am proud to remember that my dear husband, then Governor of the colony, was one of those who helped to open the door and let Prince Charming in.

They tell me the colony is quite different now, and that Perth is unrecognisable. I try to be glad to hear it, and keep repeating to myself that the revenue of a month now is what we thought good for a year, ten years ago. But no one can be more than happy, and I question very much if the rich people there to-day are any happier or even better off, in the true sense of the words, than we were. Of course enormous progress has been made, and many of the works and wants which we only dreamed of and longed for, have suddenly become accomplished facts. Our Cinderella's shoes have turned out to be made of gold, but they pinch her now and then, and have to be eased here and there. Still they are, no doubt, true fairy shoes, and will grow conveniently with the growth of her feet.

In our day—which began in May 1883—the colony was as quiet and primitive as possible, but none the less delightful and

essentially homelike. I must confess that one of its greatest attractions in my eyes was what more youthful and enterprising spirits used to call the dulness of Perth. But it never was really dull. To me there always appeared to be what I see some American newspapers describe as 'happenings' going on.

For instance, one morning I was called into the Governor's office to look at a tin collar just sent up from the port of Fremantle for the Governor's inspection. It appeared that the two little children of a respectable tradesman in Fremantle had that morning been playing on a lonely part of the beach, and had observed a large strange bird, half floating, half borne in by the incoming tide. It was a very flat bit of shore just there, and the sea was as smooth as glass, so the boy—bold and brave, as colonial boys are—fearing to lose the curious creature, waded in a little way, and, seizing it by the tip of the outstretched wing, dragged it safely to land. There, after a few convulsive movements and struggles, the poor bird died, and the little ones wisely set off at once to fetch their father to look at what they thought was an enormous seagull. When Mr. — arrived at the spot, he at once saw that the bird was an albatross, and furthermore that a large fish was sticking in its throat. A closer inspection revealed that a sort of tin collar round the neck, large enough to allow of its feeding under ordinary circumstances, but not wide enough to let so big a fish pass down its gullet, had strangled it. The collar had evidently formed part of a preserved meat tin of rather a large size, with the top and bottom knocked out, and around it were these words, punched quite distinctly in the tin, probably by the point of a nail :

*'Treize naufragés sont réfugiés sur les Iles Crozets, ce'*—then followed a date of about twelve days before. *'Au secours, pour l'amour de Dieu !'*

In those days everything used to be referred to the Governor, so Mr. — at once went to the police station, got an Inspector to come and look at the bird, hear the children's story, take the collar off—a work of some difficulty, in fact the head had to be cut off—and bring it up by next train to Perth.

It was an intensely interesting story, and aroused all our sympathy. A telegram was at once sent off to the Admiral commanding on the Australian station, telling the tale, and asking for help to be sent to the Crozets ; but the swiftly returned answer stated, with great regret, that it was impossible to do this, and that the Cape Squadron was the one to communicate with. Now unfor-

tunately this was impossible in those days, so another message was despatched directly to the Minister for Marine Affairs in Paris, and next day we heard that the Department had discovered—through an apparently admirable system of ship registry—that a small vessel had sailed from Bordeaux some months before and that the way to her destined port would certainly take her past the Iles Crozets. No news of her arrival at that port had ever been received, so a message was even then on its way to the nearest French naval station ordering immediate relief to be sent to the Crozets. This reply, most courteously worded, added that there were *caches* of food on these islands, which statement was borne out by the fresh look of the tin collar. A curious confirmation of the story was elicited by the volunteered statement of the captain of a newly arrived sailing wool-ship, who said that in a certain latitude, which turned out to be within quite measurable distance of the Crozets, an albatross had suddenly appeared in the wake of the ship, feeding greedily on the scraps and refuse thrown overboard, and the crew observed with surprise that the bird followed them right into the open roadstead which then represented Fremantle harbour. The date coincided exactly with the figures on the tin. The bird must have found the collar inconvenient for fishing, and had joined the ship to feed on these softer scraps, until, with the conclusion of the little vessel's voyage, the supplies also ceased.

Stories should always end well, but alas! this one does not. We heard nothing more for several weeks, and then came an official document, full of gratitude for the prompt action taken, but stating that when the French gunboat reached the Crozets it was found quite deserted. A similar tin, with the same sort of punched letters on it, had been left behind saying that the contents of the *cache* had all been used, and that, supplies being exhausted, the *naufragés* were going to attempt to construct some sort of a raft on which to try to reach another of the islets where a fresh supply of food might possibly be found hidden. This message had briefly added that the poor shipwrecked sailors were literally starving.

The most diligent and careful search failed, however, to discover the slightest trace of the unfortunate men or their raft. Probably they were already so weak and exhausted when they started that they could not navigate their cumbrous craft in the broken water and currents between the Islands. We felt very sad at this tragic end to the wonderful message brought by the albatross, and only

wished we had possessed any sort of steamer which could have been despatched that same day to the Iles Crozets.

Another morning—and such a beautiful morning too!—F. looked in at the drawing-room window, and asked if I would like to come with him to the Central Telegraph Office—a very little way off—and hear the first messages over a line stretching many hundreds of miles away to the far North-west of the colony. Of course, I was only too delighted, especially as I had ‘assisted’ at the driving in of the very first pole of that same telegraph line two or three years before at Geraldton, some three hundred miles up the coast.

I was much amazed at the wonderful familiarity of the operator with his machine. How he seemed hardly to pause in what he was himself saying, to remark, ‘They are very pleased to hear your Excellency is here, and wish me to say—’ and then would come a message glibly disentangled from a rapid succession of incoherent little clicks and taps. Presently came a longer and more consecutive series of pecks and clicks, to which the operator condescended to listen carefully, and even to jot down a pencilled word now and then. This turned out to be a communication from the sergeant of police in charge of the little group of white men up in that distant spot, where no European foot had ever trodden before, to the effect that he had lately come across a native tribe who had an Englishwoman with them. The sergeant went on to say that this woman had been wrecked twenty years before, somewhere on that North-west coast, and that she and her baby-boy—the only survivors of the disaster—had ever since lived with this tribe. She could still speak English, and had told the sergeant that these natives had always treated her with the utmost kindness, and had in fact regarded her as a supernatural and sacred guest. Her son was, of course, a grown-up man by this time, and had quite thrown in his lot with the tribe. She declared she had enjoyed excellent health all those years, and had never suffered from anything worse than tender feet. She hastened to add that whenever her feet became sore from travelling barefoot, the tribe halted until they had healed.

Naturally, we were deeply thrilled by this unexpected romance clicked out in such a commonplace way, and the Governor at once authorised the sergeant—all by telegraph—to tell the poor exile that, if she chose, she and her son should be brought down to Perth at once, cared for, and sent to any place she wished, free of all expense.

Of course we had to wait a few moments whilst the sergeant explained this message, though he had wisely taken the precaution of getting the tribe to 'come in' to the little station as soon as he knew the line would be open. I spent the interval in making plans for the poor soul's reception and comfort, promising myself to do all I could to make up to her for those years of wandering about with savages. But my schemes vanished into thin air as soon as the clicks began again, for the woman steadily refused to leave the friendly tribe—who, I may mention, were listening, the sergeant said, with the most breathless anxiety for her decision. She declared that nothing would induce her son to come away, and that she had not the least desire to do so either. The Governor tried hard, in his own kind and eloquent words, to persuade her to accept his offer, or, failing that, to say what she would like done for her own comfort, and to reward the tribe who had been so hospitable and good to her. She would accept nothing for herself, but hesitatingly asked for more blankets and a little extra flour and 'bacey' for the tribe. This was promised willingly, and some tea was to be added.

My contribution to the conversation was to demand a personal description of the woman from the sergeant, but I cannot say that I gathered much idea of her appearance from his halting and somewhat laboured word-portrait. Apparently she was not beautiful; no wonder, poor soul!—tanned as to skin, and bleached as to hair, by exposure to weather. Only her blue eyes and differing features showed her English origin. She had kept no count of time, nothing but the boy's growth told that many years must have passed.

'They look upon her as a sort of queen,' the sergeant declared, 'and don't want her to leave them.' It was very tantalising, and I felt quite injured and hurt at the collapse of all my plans for restoring such an involuntary prodigal daughter to her relatives.

I fear I became rather troublesome after this episode, and got into a way of continually demanding if there were nothing else interesting going on up in that distant region; but, except the sad and too frequent report of interrupted communication, which was nearly always found to mean a burned-down telegraph pole, there was nothing more heard of the tribe or its guest whilst we remained in the colony. But these burned telegraph poles held a tragedy of their own; for they were always caused by a fire lighted at their base as the very last resource of a starved and dying traveller to attract attention. I fear I was just as grieved

when, as sometimes happened, it turned out to be a convict, who was making a desperate and fruitless effort to escape, as when it was an explorer who perished. The routine followed was that, as soon as the line became interrupted, two workmen with tools and two native police officers would set out from the hut, one of each going along the line in opposite directions until the 'fault' was found. As the huts or stations were at least a hundred and fifty miles apart, and the dry burning desert heat made travelling slow work, this was often an affair of days, and I was assured that the relieving party never yet found the unhappy traveller alive. All this is now quite a thing of the dark and distant ages, for a railway probably now runs over those very same sand plains, and no doubt Pullman cars will be a luxury of the near future.

I wonder, however, if the natives of those North-west districts still contrive, from time to time, to possess themselves of the insulators, which they fashion with their flint tools into admirable spear-heads. Also if they have at all grasped the meaning of those same telegraph poles. In the days I speak of, they considered the white man 'too much fool-um,' as the kangaroos could easily get under this high fence, which was supposed to have been put up to keep them from trespassing!

It must have been towards the end of 1889 that men began to hope the statement of an eminent geologist, made years before, was going to prove true, and that 'the root of the great gold-bearing tree would be found in Western Australia.' Reports of gold, more or less wild, came in from distant quarters, and although it was most desirable to help and encourage explorers, there was great danger of anything like a 'rush' towards those arid and waterless districts from which the best and most reliable news came.

One of the many 'gold' stories which reached us just then amused me much at the time, though doubtless it has settled into being regarded as a very old chestnut by now. Still it is none the less true.

A man came in to a very outlying and distant station with a small nugget, which he said he had picked up, thinking it was a stone, to throw at a crow, and finding it unusually heavy, examined it, and lo! it was pure gold. Naturally there was great excitement at this news, and the official in charge of the district rushed to the telegraph office and wired to the head of his department, some four hundred miles away in Perth: 'Man here picked up stone to throw at crow.' He thought this would tell the whole



story, but apparently it did not, for the answer returned was: 'And what became of the crow?'

Diggers used to go up the coast, as far as they could, in the small mail steamers, and then strike across the desert, often on foot, pushing their tools and food before them in a wheelbarrow. Naturally, they could neither travel far nor fast in this fashion, and there was always the water difficulty to be dealt with. Still a man will do and bear a great deal when golden nuggets dangle before his eyes, and some sturdy bushmen actually did manage to reach the outskirts of the great gold region. The worst of it was that under these circumstances no one could remain long, even if he struck gold; for there was no food to be had except what they took with them. As is generally the case in everything, one did not hear much of the failures; but every now and then a lucky man with a few ounces of gold in his possession found his way back to Perth. Nearly all who returned brought fragments of quartz to be assayed, and every day the hope grew which has since been so abundantly justified.

It happened now and then that a little party of diggers who had been helped to make a start would ask to see me before they set out, not wanting anything except to say good-bye, and to receive my good wishes for their success. Poor fellows! I often asked about them, but could seldom trace their career after a short while. Once I received, months after one of those farewell visits, a little packet of tiny gold nuggets, about an ounce in all, wrapped in very dirty newspaper, with a few words to say they were the first my poor friends had found. I could not even make out how the package had reached me, and although I tried to get a letter of thanks returned to the sender, I very much doubt if he ever received it.

However, one day a message came out to me from the Governor's office to say H. E. had been hearing a very interesting story, and would I like to hear it too? Nothing would please me better, and in a few minutes the teller of the story was standing in my morning room, with a large and heavy lump, looking like a dirty stone, held out for my inspection. I wish I could give the whole story in his own simple and picturesque words, but alas! I cannot remember them all accurately. Too many waves and storms of sorrow have gone over my head since those bright and happy days, and time and tears have dimmed many details. However, I distinctly remember having been much struck by the grave simplicity of my visitor's manner, and I also noticed that,

although it was one of our scorching summer days, with a hot wind blowing, he was arrayed in a brand-new suit of thick cloth, which he could well have worn at the North Pole! He seemed quite awed by his good fortune, and continually said how undeserved it was. But I suppose this must have been his modesty, for he certainly appeared to have gone through his fair share of hardships. He had been one of what the diggers called 'the barrow men,' and had held on almost too long after his scanty supplies had run short.

The little party to which he belonged had been singularly unfortunate; for, although they found here and there a promise of gold, nothing payable had been struck. At last the end came. This man had reached the very last of his resources without finding a speck of gold, and although men in such extremity are always kind and helpful to each other, he could not expect any one to share such fast dwindling stores with him. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to turn back on the morrow, whilst a mouthful of food was still left, and to retrace his steps, as best he might, to the nearest port. He dwelt, with a good deal of rough pathos, on the despair of that last day's fruitless work which left him too weak and exhausted to carry his heavy tools back to the spot they called 'camp.' So he just flung them down, and as he said 'staggered' over the two or three miles of scrub-covered desert, guided by the smoke of the camp fire. Next morning early, after a great deal of sleep and very little food, he braced himself up to go back and fetch his tools, though he carefully explained that he would not have taken the trouble to do this if he had not felt that his pick and barrow were about his only possessions, and might fetch the price of a meal or two when it came to the last.

I have often wondered since if the impression of the Divine mercy and goodness, which was so strong in that man's mind just then, has ever worn off. He dwelt with self-accusing horror on how he had railed at his luck, at Fate, at everything, as he stumbled back that hot morning over his tracks of the day before. The way seemed twice as long, for, as he said, 'his heart was too heavy to carry.' At last he saw his barrow and pick standing up on the flat plain a little way off, and was wearily dragging on towards them, when he caught his toe against a stone deeply imbedded in the sand, and fell down. His voice sank to a sort of awestruck whisper, as if he were almost at Confession, as he said,

‘Well, ma’am, if you’d believe me, I cursed awful, I felt as if it was too hard altogether to bear. To think that I should go and nearly break my toe against the only stone in the district, and with all those miles to travel back. So I lay there like Job’s friend and cursed God and wanted to die. After a bit I felt like a passionate child who kicks and breaks the thing which has hurt him, and I had to beat that stone before I could feel quiet. But it was too firm in the sand for my hands to get it up, so in my rage I set off quite briskly for the pick to break up that stone, if it took all my strength. It was pretty deep-set in the ground, I assure you, ma’am; but at last I got it up, and here it is—solid gold and nearly as big as a baby’s head. Now, ma’am, I ask you, did I deserve this?’

He almost banged the rather dirty-looking lump down on the table before me as he spoke, and it certainly was a wonderful sight, and a still more wonderful weight. He told me he had searched about the neighbourhood of that nugget all day, but there was not the faintest trace of any more gold. So, as he had no time to lose on account of the shortness of the food and water supply, he just started back to the coast, which he reached quite safely, and came straight down to Perth in the first steamer. The principal bank had advanced him 800% on his nugget, but it would probably prove to be worth twice as much. I asked him what he was going to do, and was rather sorry to hear that he intended to go back to England at once, and set up a shop or a farm—I forget which—among his own people. Of course it was not for me to dissuade him, but I felt it was a pity to lose such a good sort of man out of the colony, for he was not spending his money in champagne and card-playing, as all the very few successful gold-finders did in those first early days. I believe the purchase of that one suit of winter clothing in which to come and see the Governor had been his only extravagance.

That was the delightful part of those patriarchal times—only ten years ago, remember—that all the joys and sorrows used to find their way to Government House. I always tried to divide the work, telling our dear colonial friends that when they were prosperous and happy they were the Governor’s business, but when they were sick or sorrowful or in trouble they belonged to my department; and so we both found plenty to do, and were able to get very much inside, as it were, the lives of those among whom our lot was cast for seven busy, happy years.

### THE BLACK CANOE.

It was the hour when pipes were lit and the steam from the hot pools and geysers rose white in the chill of evening.

'She was through it,' said the grey-bearded skipper with an indicatory thumb turned towards the native woman.

'Through the eruption?' cried the tourist. 'Get her to tell us about it,' as if the skipper were the showman in charge.

Howhaia cocked a bright black eye at the speaker, and the shadow of a smile crossed the impassive brown face.

'Howhaia,' said the skipper from behind an apologetic cloud of cigarette smoke that concealed a wink, 'tell us about it—you were there.'

The woman took the black clay from between her tattooed lips, and from the corner where she squatted on the floor looked slowly round the room.

'Very well,' she said. She spoke English well even for a missionary-made native. 'If the gentlemen wishes to hear I can tell them. *Āē*. I was there. Before it came, and when it came, and I know.' She paused as if to find her words.

The smoking-room gave ear. It was only ten miles from the new craters on the mountain; there were hot springs almost under the floor; and that week an old native prophet had taken up his parable and foretold a second eruption about that very time; which made the story interesting.

'Well——' she began, and stopped.

A murmur of expectation ran round the smoking-room. The mine-man from Gympie struck a match and relit his pipe. For a space the room was very quiet. Through the open window came the long sigh of a tired geyser, and the distant laughter of native girls playing in the hot pools in the moonlight. A fitful breeze rose somewhere up the valley, and whimpered across the tea-tree, bringing with it a smell of sulphur and the voice of the Paurenga Creek babbling under the bridge on its way to the silent lake.

'Well,' said the gouty 'Gumsucker,' who travelled for a Melbourne firm, 'wade in, old girl; we're waiting to hear about your big firework.'

She looked up with keen dark eyes.

'*Taihoa!* by-and-by. No hurry.' She drew hard at her pipe, and a far-away dreamy look stole into the wrinkled brown face. She was looking at a picture out of the past, at a lake that is no longer on the map, and to her the terraced silica basins shone again among the dusky green tea-tree under the southern sun.

'There were two men,' she began at last, 'Apara and Pohutu, and they quarrelled. They fought about a pig and some *kumara* [sweet potato]. That's how it all began.'

'*Himmel!*' exclaimed the big German from the Gulf, who knew about sugar and kanakas. 'Do you tell me——'

'Hush! let her talk,' said the frozen meat man by the window. The German retired behind a big meerschaum.

'Yes,' she continued. 'They quarrelled. Apara took the black and yellow pig from the litter of Pohutu's brother's best sow, and Pohutu took a kit of *kumara* from Apara's wife's sister. It was *utu* [payment], and quite right. But Apara was angry, and said Bible-swears to Pohutu. Then Pohutu said "You talk! You. But there comes soon a great evil you little think of." They were bad words, for he was a great *tokunga* [priest] and his *mana* was very strong. So he went to his house. But Apara was afraid because of the curse.'

'That was about three months before the big 'ruption, and one month before it Apara died because of the curse. That shows you it was nothing to do with the 'ruption like these Arawa say. But when the 'ruption came Pohutu was buried in his *wharè* [hut] under the deep mud. Five days he was buried before they dug him up, and found him sitting there alive. Tommy, there, that drives the coach, he found him.'

Tommy nodded his red nose in answer to the inquiring glances thrown towards his corner.

'You tell 'em, Tommy,' said she encouragingly.

Tommy cleared his throat for action, and expectorated thoughtfully beneath the table.

'Well, it was this way,' he said. 'When we got the mud cleared and knocked a hole in the roof of the old man's *wharè* we seen him sitting there like a bloomin' sp'inx as if nothing had happened.'

"*Tenakoe!*" he says as cool as a water-melon.

"*Tenakoe!*" I says. "How're you feelin'?"

"*Kapai*, quite well," says he.

"Well, come out," I says.

"No," says he, "this is my *wharè*. I stay here."

"Don't ye want a bite o' tucker?" I asks, kind o' astonished.

"No," he says again, "I had plenty *kai* five days ago."

"That knocked me, and I thought he gone mad, so I got down and hoisted him out——"

"Yes," Howhaia broke in. "They got him out and sent him away to the hospital in town. But it was no good. He wouldn't eat a thing. They washed him too, and wanted to cut off his hair. But Pohutu said, "If you cut my hair, I die to-morrow." But they did cut it and he died right enough. *Kaitoa!* He was no good!"

"That's what the Maori say," put in Tommy the driver, "but it's a bloomin' cuffer. The old cure had no more hair to his head than a pumpkin. He was like a bit o' dried-up hide as tough as a bloomin' whip-handle."

Somebody laughed incautiously, and Howhaia's eyes kindled.

"It is true all the same, gentlemen," she said, casting a vindictive glance at Tommy. "That's how Pohutu died; but the Maori here, these Arawa, say that Pohutu's curse brought the 'ruption, and they think that is why he lived though he was buried five days. But I don't b'lieve all that. I am a Ngapuhi; all the Arawa are slaves."

In the pause that followed the fat French Creole scribbled furiously in a corpulent notebook which all of us knew but too well.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he said, looking up from his writing, "vas it five days, Madame? Five days he vas buried?"

"No, five months," replied the 'Gumsucker.'

"Five months! *C'est vrai?*" began the voluble Frenchman. He was known as the 'Spout-bath,' because when turned on he emitted an unceasing stream of false facts about everything. He seemed to have started. The globe-trotting Britisher groaned audibly. The mild professor raised a deprecatory hand.

"Turn him off, turn him off," said the Gypmie miner in an aside to the skipper.

Howhaia looked up.

"I vonce haird——" began the 'Spout-bath,' but she interrupted him.

"The gentlemen wishes to hear me," she said decisively; "when I am done they may hear you, sir."

The room smiled.

The 'Spout-bath's' stubbly beard bristled, but he was silent.

'Good on the Maori,' murmured the 'Gumsucker.'

'*Aē*,' said Howhaia, rolling out the full-mouthed vowels, 'I was going to tell you more 'bout what happened before the 'ruption.

'It was fourteen days before the big crash. I was upon the lake, not the old lake that is gone, but the one you have seen. There were two Maori paddling my canoe and one *Pakeha* [European]. I don't know his name, but he had paper and paint and made pictures.

'It was 'bout nine in the morning, with a blue sky, and a very little breath of a north wind. We had paddled 'bout halfway down the lake when all sudden the water began to go back and fore—back and fore—like this.' She swayed from side to side, swinging wide her arms.

'Big waves came over the lake.' She went on, springing to her feet, and walking the room with earnest gestures and sparkling eyes. 'Big waves!—and the wind had dropped. It was still overhead, and not a cloud! There was no sound, but the waves came rolling up, and the canoe heaved and dipped, and I tell you I wondered what was coming!'

Suddenly she stood rigid, pointing with one brown skinny finger across the room, and her eyes were fixed and staring as if she were looking through the further wall.

'Then I saw,' she said slowly, with lowered voice, 'I saw 'way on the far side of the lake a great canoe shoot out from the *pohutukawa*—Christmas-trees you call them—that grow on the shore. It was a long way off, 'bout a mile and a half, but I could see it was a big war-canoe. There was only one man in it, and he was not paddling; but it came on towards us, like a shark. There was only one man, for we saw. He was very big, and he stood up in the nose of the canoe and danced the *Ngarahu*!'

She leaped into the middle of the room as she spoke, and illustrated the war-dance, with quivering palms and eyes rolling furiously.

'No!' she continued, panting from her exertions, 'there was none to paddle it, but the canoe came on straight for us. Then, as it came nearer, we could see two men in it—the tall man that danced and another that paddled.'



'The two Maori that were with me were afraid. They said, "Let us go back, this is a devil," but I said "No. It is all right. I will not go back." So we paddled on.

'The war-canoe came nearer and nearer, and as it came I saw in it three men, then four, then five'—she counted on her fingers as she spoke—'then six. We all counted. The two men that were with me were Kepa and Totaia. They are alive. Ask them if it is not true.

'The big canoe came on and on, and we saw more men, more men, more men. When they came near there were twelve paddling and the tall man that danced. They were only two hundred yards away and their paddles made the water white, but we could hear no sound. The big man danced and sang the war-song, for his mouth moved, and the paddles kept time to the song, but we heard nothing. My word! I was afraid. But the *Pakeha* sat still with his paper and things making a picture of that canoe.

'It came on. The men were all naked and tattooed—not like we tattoo now—it was the old tattooing our fathers had long ago. They had angry faces painted with red clay like they used to in the old wars. The canoe was old too—black with oldness. It had a high-carved nose—what you call it?'

'Figure-head,' suggested the skipper.

'Aē. That's it. The figure-head was all carved over with faces and great *Parua*-shell eyes, with feathers tied upon it. The big man in the nose of it was a chief. He had the red *kaka*-feather belt about his waist, and in his hair the *huia* feathers, and a greenstone *merē* in his hand. He was a great chief, but a chief of the dead.

'I looked, shaking. And I said to myself, "What men are these? They are not of the tribes of the *Arawa*."

'Totaia and Kepa stopped paddling for fear. These *Arawa* are cowards. But the *Pakeha* was not afraid. He went on with his picture—a good picture, *ka pai*.'

'When the black war-canoe came to the middle of the lake 'bout fifty yards from us I stood up holding the steering paddle and called—"Tena Koutou!" But those men took no heed. And we heard nothing, not a whisper of a sound, but the water rippling under the steering paddle. The two Maori that were with me lay in the bottom of the canoe making prayers. The *Pakeha* went on painting. The black canoe came right on, and

I said to myself, "They will run into us, we shall drown. My day has come to die." So I sat still and looked.'

'Then suddenly the black canoe was gone. A! Gone! We did not see whether it went up or down. It was gone! But the lake rose up like a horse's back when it bucks, and we on top. Then we went round and round, and the water fell away below us and we went down and the waves rose like green mountains round us, and broke in over us. I held the steering-paddle in both hands and tried to keep her nose to the waves; but it was no good, though I paddled till my arms were sore. The two Maoris cried out like pigs with the dogs on 'em, and I thought we must sink. But the *Pakeha* only said "By Jove!" like the Englishmen always say, and all the time there was not a breath of wind and the sky was blue above.

'It did not last long. Suddenly it was all quiet and the lake grew calm again, but our canoe was sinking. We took in so much water. The Maoris were still praying, lying in the water in the bottom of our canoe, till I said, "You dog's-food, bale or we'll sink!" But Totaia cried out that it was a *taniwha* [water spirit] and Kepa said it was—I don't know your word—*makutu* we say.'

'Witchcraft,' said the skipper.

'Yes, that's it, wishcraft. Kepa said it was wishcraft. But I said "No. It is an *aitua* [an omen]. There is harm to come." And I was right. It came. And just fourteen days afterwards we had the big eruption.

'It is true. All square. I saw the black canoe as clear as I see you now. And Totaia saw it and Kepa. You can ask them. And the *Pakeha* made a picture of it. I saw the picture next day. It was very good.'

'Who was the man that drew it?' asked the globe-trotter.

'I don't know,' she answered; 'he went away south; I never saw him again.'

Howhaia squatted down to get her breath and another drink.

'First time I ever heard of a ghost having its portrait painted,' said the 'Gumsucker.'

'*Mais comment?*' said the Spout-bath, fumbling with the fat notebook, 'ave I understand? Ze big man, how big lie vas?'

'Ten feet,' said the mine-man.

The Spout-bath made a note of it.

'May I ask—ah—madam, if you had no intimation of the

approaching volcanic disturbance other than this—ah—this remarkable appearance?’ asked the quiet Professor, suddenly finding voice.

Howhaia looked at him.

‘Your words are too big,’ she said.

‘Tell us what else happened,’ said the skipper. She rose at once and resumed her story.

‘The day before the ’ruption I took a party to see the lake. We crossed in the canoe and went to the White Terrace first. It was spouting hot water up high in the air and throwing up stones. I never seen it do that before, and I thought—something is going to come.

‘Then I took them to the Pink Terrace and the other things, and after that returned across the lake in the canoe. The lake was always covered with green weeds. It was all green as usual when we crossed in the morning, but when we got back in the afternoon there wasn’t a weed upon it. I did not like that. I said, “Let us get back quick. Something is going to happen.” So we went back.

‘Next day the young men wanted to go gun-shooting, but I said, “Do not go—there is a feel in the air—it will rain or something. Do not go!” So we stayed all day by the *wharès*.

‘I went to bed late—after eleven may be. I had not slept long when something woke me.

‘I sat up in bed and listened. It was very still. Then suddenly there came a rumbling deep down under the ground, like the sound of a hundred bullock-drays crossing the wooden bridge at Wairoa. Everything began to shake. I sat up and the dark all shook round me till I felt sick.

‘I got up and ran to my sister’s *wharè* to get the children, for she was away, and I was looking after them. Every one, Maori and white, was running about in the black dark shouting. The Maoris came together to my *wharè* because it was large, and we stayed there.

‘The shaking went on for ’bout an hour—then came the bust up! There was a terrible noise like big guns booming and a sound of thunder below, and then one tremendous roar. A! It made me deaf for days. The people wanted to run out, but I shouted, “Do not go out—we are safe here!” So they stayed in my house.’

After that mud and stones began to fall out of the sky.

The mud fell on the roofs of the houses, some were buried and some crushed by the weight. Hot stones came crashing through the thatch and killed many people. The big hotel fell like a crumpled leaf, and some of the *Pakeha* there were killed. But my little *wharè* was strong. There were fifty of us there, men, women and children. There was no room to sit, so we stood close, like small trees in the bush, till morning.

‘*Aë*. We stood there thick, and the ground shook and we clung together, and the people talked, talked, like frogs in the swamp. But the noise was too loud to hear what was said a yard away.

‘The *wharè* was ’bout as big as this place, but not so high. It was a strong house with thick roof-beams. There were with us two very strong men, Peta and Heme, and now and again I sent them out to clear the mud from the door so we could get out. They tried to get the mud off the roof, but they could not keep it clear.

‘Then the roof began to bend in with the weight of the mud above. So I said, “What more can we do? Let us pray!” But there was among us a very old man, a chief, and he held up a lighted candle and shouted, so we heard him above the terrible noise—“Listen! We want props not prayers! First let us find props for the roof, then let us pray.” So Peta and Heme went out and found two *totara* poles, and with them we propped the roof. After that we prayed, standing close, we were so many. It was terribly hot. We could hardly breathe, and the awful roar of the ’ruption made my head ache. So we stood and waited for day.

‘But no light came, and at last we thought it must be morning, and we went out to look. ’Way off to the north was a little grey light, and above the clouds were like blood from the fires of the mountain, but all around us it was dark. *Aë*. The ’ruption was still keeping on, going boom! boom! now and again, and the mud still fell, though not so heavy.

‘Then I said, “Come, we must go to Ohinemutu. It is light over there.”

‘It is ten mile, as you know, up hills and down gullies. You know the time it takes to ride by the track? We had no track, and we walked in the dark, going down to our knees in mud at every step. It was hot mud, and our legs were all blisters.’

Here Tommy, the driver, interrupted. ‘That’s the native yarn,’ he said—he had no imagination—‘they lie like a dead

eel, though. I was across there a few hours after they got through, and the mud was scarce warm, and as hard as a bloomin' beach.'

'You shut up, Tommy,' said Howhaia. 'They don't want to hear your gas.' And she went on:

'I had my sister's two children, one with each hand, pulling them with me, for they were too tired to walk. At the creek we found the bridge had six feet o' mud on it, and had broken down; but we climbed over on the top of the mud. The coach road was gone—there was only grey mud; but we got to the shore of the Green Lake, and we walked along the edge till we reached Tikitapu.

'It was blowing a hurricane. The mud was driving, mixed with rain and hail, in our eyes. The waves of the lake dashed up in our faces, but we walked through the water to cool our feet till we reached the bush.

'That was the worst—the bush. It was terrible. It was black-dark, only, when a flash of lightning come, we'd see all round, like it was day, and the trees reeling round, like they was drunk. Now and again a big *rata* tree would come down, crash! across the path before us; and, in the dark, we would run into it, and go tumbling one over another, thinking we was all *pakarued* [broken in pieces].

'The noise was awful to hear. The thunder, and the wind, and the boom! boom! of the 'ruption, and the crashing of the trees was all mixed, till you'd think the world had split and the stars were falling.

'The mud and stones were coming down, and hail and rain mixed with them. It was bitter cold. The wind cut like a knife, and I was shivering with chill and fright. Away behind we could see the big trees waving like grass against the red cloud above Tarawera; and then the lightning would come, "whi-whi," like a blue eel across the blackness, and rip through the trees, and send the branches flying. There was a smell like sulphur in the wind, and the air was full of things spinning—sticks and stones, and mud and hail. My word! we couldn't see the track, nor each other. But we went tumbling among the mud and fallen trees, holding on to one another, and crying like children. Lord! I don't know how we came out alive.

'But we walked and we prayed all we knew, and at last we came through to the open hills. There was a little light, like the

rainy dawn, and we could see only grey mud, grey mud, everywhere. There was no road, and the country seemed all new. We come on wide cracks in the ground that went away down to the belly of the earth, and at the bottom we could hear the 'ruption rumbling along like a great bullock team. A sort of dust was falling even there. There wasn't a green thing to be seen on all the hills, and the cold wind howled across the grey mud like the dead on the road to night. Oh! my Lord!'

For a full second the woman stood staring straight before her, and her eyes were wide with the reflection of past fear. There was silence till she spoke again.

'About sundown we got near Ohinemutu. Down by the lake it was light, but behind us was the darkness full of sounds. So we came to Ohinemutu, and rested there. The people that came with me are most of them alive. They live down there by the lake.'

She stopped abruptly, and squatted down in her corner again.

'Andt do you believe dat it all so happen begause you saw dat so schrecklich boat upon der lake?' asked the sugar-man, who was by nature sceptical and philosophic.

'No,' replied Howhaia, gravely; 'I do not say the 'ruption came because of the black canoe. I say the canoe came because of the 'ruption. It was a warning.'

'But if you knew something was going to bu'st, why didn't you pack your traps and clear?' asked the 'Gumsucker.'

'Because,' answered she, solemnly, 'how was we to know? It might have been worse to go than stay. The mountain had stood for ever; how could we tell it would change? It was better to stay by our *wharès* and pray.'

Then the room grew very quiet, but for the rustle of the leaves of the Spout-bath's big notebook. Outside there were weird noises across the yellow road, where the mud volcanoes grunt and plop among the tea-tree. A little fitful wind whined at the open window, and set the smoke wreaths rolling back.

'Time for the *moë* [sleep],' said the skipper, taking out his watch.

The 'Gumsucker' yawned. 'Walk a weary-weary-walk-ah,' he said solemnly; which expression had for him some occult reference to the locality that afforded him much simple enjoyment.

So the company bade itself good-night, and broke up, and went its ways whither Fate, or Thomas Cook, decreed.

. . . . .

Nearly twelve months after that story was told and forgotten, I was in a southern town. I know a man there who talks of the 'Budding Art of the Colony,' and who buys local work for the pleasure of himself and the encouragement of the colony aforesaid. He has time and money, and therefore a hobby, which he inflicts upon his friends. They call him a bore, but being a moneyed bore, they bear with him and his hobby. He showed me his collection and let off his views on 'Art.'

While he was talking, and I was attending less to his words than to his pictures, two sketches caught my eye. They were not like the majority of the collection, but showed a boldness of touch and sense of colour very refreshing to the sight after the endless colonial 'potboilers,' with their cake-icing mountains and castor-oil lakes.

The smaller sketch was a corner of native life, and seemed to me good, but it was the larger sketch that interested me. It was a water-colour, twenty inches by fourteen, of a lake scene.

A huge carved war-canoe, with a black befeathered figure-head, seemed to come straight for one out of the frame. The pearl-shell eyes of the carvings stared straight at one and looked very eerie. Twelve men paddled the canoe, and in the bows a naked giant brandished a greenstone club. A hot, sleepy-looking haze seemed to shimmer along the lake, and the line of brown faces and raised paddles toned off into this haze and gave the thing a ghostly look. Through the body of the last paddler I could see the dim outline of the farther shore, as if through a veil of brown smoke. And, strangely enough, though the feathers of the figure-head stood straight upright, and there was no sign of wind, the lake was covered with waves that broke in foam from the bow of the canoe. As I looked at that picture I felt my flesh creep as if a lizard were crawling down my spine.

Then I saw in the corner of the sketch, in red ink, the words:—

'Tarawera, May 23rd, 1886.'

and the initials, 'J. M.'

And suddenly Howhaia's tale returned to me, and with an



uneasy creeping sensation I turned to ask my friend where he got the pictures.

'I got those two,' he said, 'five or six years ago. I don't know who the artist was. It is a curious story. A man came to me one day, looking half-starved and very shabby. He said he was hard up, and asked me to buy those sketches. I liked them, and I took them at his own figure, partly to give the poor devil a chance, and partly because I thought they were worth it. There are some unaccountable faults about the larger one—that broken water, for instance, with a haze and no wind—but it isn't bad work otherwise. New school, of course, and I don't altogether hold with the——'

'What was his name?' I enquired.

'I never asked his name. I asked if he had any more sketches for sale, and he said these were his last, that he had been forced to sell his brushes and things and had not been able to get others. He said he would come again. I was interested in the man and wanted to find out more about him. But I did not get the chance. Three days after I saw him they found him on the hill there, sitting with his back to a stone and his face to the sea—dead, with an empty laudanum bottle by his side.

'There was no clue to his identity found upon him, so I can tell you no more than the picture can. Curious the number of suicides out here, isn't it? Did you notice this sketch? It is one of Gully's best.' And we passed on.

I did not tell him that he possessed the only authentic picture of a phantom done from life—or death, or whatever it is—because he would not have believed me. I pretended to listen to his notions about Art instead, while I thought of the dead man's picture of the dead, and was uncomfortable and puzzled exceedingly.

Such are the facts. There is the picture, and I am willing to give the address of the owner to any person who desires to see it. And there is the woman's story, just as she told it, and she has the witness of two able-bodied men to bear it out. So much I know. I can't pretend to explain the thing. I have tried, but have given it up, and have relegated it to the dusty corner where we pile the things we do not want to believe, yet cannot explain away.

VICTOR WAITE.

CONFERENCES ON BOOKS AND MEN.

II.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your remark that my ‘Conference’ in your April number, while of a certain interest to literary persons (you were always too good to me), was yet lacking in ‘actuality,’ gave me but a moment’s uneasiness, and that was from your use of so journalistic a neologism. For it would have been idle to expect that such a very informal and inexpert defence of Astrology as I could offer, would have weight upon a first consideration with a person living in Cornhill, and necessarily looking at all affairs through the horn spectacles of supply and demand. But may I put to you one question before passing away from the subject? Have you noticed the remarkable satisfaction which has everywhere greeted the new Viceroy’s progress in India? You who notice everything cannot fail to have done so; but the chances are that you have attributed Lord Curzon of Kedleston’s instant and enthusiastic popularity to the graces of his person or the charm of his eloquence, and there left the matter, if you have not indeed regarded the manifestation as the indefeasible right of every representative of our imperial race. Even Mr. G. W. Steevens, whose stereoscopic eyes mirror all earth-scenes as they pass, and who therefore has faithfully registered the phenomenon, has been blind to its true cause; which is, in one word, that George Curzon was born under a lucky star. The fact may not be known in England, and if known it would only raise a smile, but in the East it is well known and thoroughly well appreciated. ‘East is East and West is West,’ as Mr. Kipling says, and if it had been Mr. Kipling that was writing letters home from India at this moment, we should know that even the Viceroy’s elephants are aware that they carry not only Caesar but his Fortune. Of course in saying this I do not derogate from Lord Curzon’s virtue; it is a familiar truth to those who study this subject, and I find it noted in Henry Curzon’s ‘Compleat Summary of Science’<sup>1</sup> that ‘a Person

<sup>1</sup> ii. 295, ed. 1712: This Henry Curzon was grandson of the first George Curzon of Kedleston. His book (without which I never travel, for it contains

may by his own Industry [and therefore also by his want of it] prevent what from the Influence of the Stars would have been his Destiny.' Influence, like all spiritual force, does not necessitate but incline, which is what Euripides means when he says that 'Skill and Fortune love each other.' May I remind you that a distinguished gentleman, whom you and I are particularly bound to honour, once made a journey 'from Cornhill to Cairo' and brought back with him no little wisdom: the journey may still, notwithstanding the English occupation, be recommended for a holiday tour to those who cannot go further East, as a solvent of much Western superstition, very necessary in this epoch of School Boards and Popular Lectures. But to-day, my dear friend, I would confer with you on quite a different subject, and one on which we are more likely to agree.

The name of Rudyard Kipling, whom we all congratulate on his recovery from the American pressman, forms a natural transition to it. I want you to condole with me on the extraordinary want that there is of patriotic songs capable of moving the masses of the people, notwithstanding that our poets have lately given evidence by poems that have appealed to the leisured classes that they are not wanting in imperial instincts. I was much struck by a letter that appeared lately in the public press from a very promising young poet, who wrote to suggest a comparatively unused topic to writers gravelled for lack of matter. The topic he suggested was Purgatory. I make bold to think the choice unfortunate, not on Protestant but on Platonic grounds. You will recollect a passage in the third book of the 'Republic' where the question is being debated as to the kind of poetry best fitted for the citizens of an ideal State, and you will recall the fact that one of the subjects objected against was this very subject of Purgatory, on the ground that its tendency was to sap courage. After quoting half-a-dozen lines of Homer about the state of the soul after death, Socrates proceeds: 'We must beg Homer and the other poets not to be angry if we strike out these and similar passages, not because they are unpoetical or unattractive to the popular ear, but because

not only a *materia medica* and the Thirty-nine Articles, but catalogues of the principal picture galleries of Europe) is a complete encyclopædia of the arts and sciences, and I cannot but think the 'Times' would have done well to reissue this instead of the monumental work, a very mausoleum of learning, that at present blocks up the libraries of so many of my friends. As the book is scarce, some account of it may be grateful to you one day when leisure serves. The 'Dictionary of National Biography' ignores Mr. Curzon.

the greater the poetical charm of them, the less are they meet for the ears of boys and men who are meant to be free, and who should fear slavery worse than death. Also we shall have to reject all the terrible and appalling names which describe the world below. I do not say that these horrible stories may not have a use of some kind; but there is a danger that the nerves of our guardians may be rendered too excitable and effeminate by them. Another and a nobler strain must be sung by us' (iii. 386, tr. Jowett). Now it is difficult not to agree with Socrates. Let us suppose for a moment that Milton, instead of writing 'Paradise Lost,' which, in Plato's words, 'may have a use of some kind,' had sung in 'another and a nobler strain,' had put his blood, for example, into battle songs of Worcester or Dunbar. Would he not have merited more of an imperial people? And, as he valued the reputation of a practical man, would he not have exercised a more real influence over the course of events than by all his prose pamphlets, which fell still-born from the press? He might—who knows?—have prevented 'the glorious Restoration,' and spared us some of the most deplorable years in our annals. And yet to speak so is perhaps to speak unwisely, for a poet gives us what he has it in him to give, even if it be only about Purgatory; and the song which we desiderate—the song that shall 'fly alive through the lips of men'—is not necessarily within the scope even of those who can write an epic about Hades. I am haunted, indeed, by the suspicion, which you, dear friend, with your wonted good nature, will censure as uncharitable, that the gentleman who expressed a wish to write the songs of the people on condition that he should be released from making the laws, would have written the songs without any such stipulation if only he had found it possible. I take leave to doubt if there are ten members of our own Legislature who could be depended upon for a patriotic song, even if they were guaranteed 'a pair' from now to the end of the session. It might nevertheless be worth Sir William Walrond's while to make the offer. And I firmly hold that it would be worth the Government's while to keep a second-class Poet Laureate for this business, just as the great Dibdin was retained in the last years of the Napoleonic Terror. If you have any weight, therefore, with any young writers, I would beg of you to divert their interests from Purgatory, which could never be made really attractive to the working classes, and centre them instead upon politics, imperial or local. It would be well to disguise the

fact, which might deter persons of real genius, that to write a successful song is the readiest way to make a fortune.

Now, what are the qualities a song must have to stir the great heart of the people? If we could ascertain this, we might be able to give our young poets some useful hints. It is needless to say that Mr. Newbolt's method, and even Mr. Kipling's, leaves the demos cold. A first fact to notice would be that the populace in England, unlike that in France, can never be brought to take itself heroically. 'Rule Britannia,' for example, is far from being a popular ditty; its vogue is amongst the middle classes, and even there is chiefly due to Arne's music, and the opportunity that allows to the aspiring vocalist. In the abstract, Englishmen do not think of priding themselves upon their national characteristics; they take them for granted. I have often felt that Mr. W. S. Gilbert, in speaking of an Englishman's *'temptation to belong to another nation,'* sacrificed truth to rhyme; it is only in the face of an enemy that a true-born Englishman takes enough stock of himself to make comparison with any other nation possible, and then the comparison necessarily results, not in admiration, but contempt. It was owing to their psychological truth in this particular that Garrick's 'Hearts of Oak,' Leveridge's 'Roast Beef of Old England,' and McDermott's 'We don't want to fight,' carried the nation by storm. I would lay down, then, as our first canon that an English fighting song must be not self-glorious, but derisive of the enemy. And so it must be with all effective political songs. I suppose the song that had more political influence in England than any before or since was 'Lilli-burlero,' which contributed not a little towards the great Rebellion in 1688. Burnet tells us that 'the whole army, and at last the people both in town and country, were singing it perpetually.' The occasion of it was the sending by James II. of the Roman Catholic Talbot, made Lord Tyrconnel, as Deputy to Ireland, and the song is supposed to be a pæan of the Irish Romanists:

Ho ! broder Teague, dost hear de decree,

*Lilli burlero, bullen-a-la.*<sup>1</sup>

Dat we shall have a new deputie,

*Lilli burlero, bullen-a-la.*

*Lero, lero, lilli burlero, &c.*

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<sup>1</sup> 'Lilli burlero and Bullen-a-lah are said to have been the words of distinction used among the Irish Papists in their massacre of Protestants in 1641'—PERCY.

Ho ! by my shoul it is de Talbot,  
And he will cut all de English troat;

Tho', by my shoul, de English do praat  
De law's on deir side, and Creish knows what.

But if dispence do come from the Pope  
We'll hang Magna Charta and dem in a rope, &c.

Alas ! in the two centuries that have elapsed, the words have lost what spice they ever had ; but the tune to which they were sung, 'a new Irish tune by Mr. Purcell,' is as captivating as ever ; it breathes a spirit of amused raillery, perfectly well-bred, and much more deadly than the loftiest contempt or the most furious scorn. You will not have forgotten that our Uncle Toby, when anything which he deemed very absurd was offered, would whistle half-a-dozen bars of it.

The Lowland Scotch, being a self-contented nation like ourselves, and not wearing their nerves outside their skin like their Highland brethren, have the same trick of ventilating their patriotism by derision of their foes ; but with a difference. Their muse has a pawky, over-prudent habit of postponing inspiration until after the issue of the fight. Everybody knows 'Heb, Johnnie Cope, are ye waukin' yet,' which was their amiable way of celebrating Sir John Cope's defeat at Prestonpans ; it goes to a tune of ribald briskness ; less well-known now, but equally ungrateful to our feelings at the time, is the 'Song *after* Ban-nockburn.' 'General Leslie's March to Longmarston Moor' has the unusual decency of affecting to be written before the engagement. But, indeed, this peculiarity, together with lines like the second, eighth, twelfth, and fourteenth, makes me suspect that it may be really an English satire, that was blind to one of the most typical characteristics of the Scottish war-song. Thus it goes :

March ! march !  
Why the Devil do ye na march ?  
Stand to your arms, my lads,  
Fight in good order ;  
Front about, ye musketeers all,  
Till ye come to the English border :  
Stand to 't and fight like men,  
True Gospel to maintain,  
The Parliament's blithe to see us a-coming.  
When to the Kirk we come  
We'll purge it ilka room,  
Frae Popish relics, and a' sic innovation ;  
That a' the world may see  
There's none i' th' right but we

Of the auld Scottish nation.  
 Jenny shall wear the hood,  
 Jockey the sark of God ;  
 And the kist fu of whistles  
 That make sic a cleiro  
     Our pipers braw  
     Shall hae them a',  
 Whate'er come on it.  
 Busk up your plaids, my lads,  
 Cock up your bonnet.  
     March ! march !  
 Why the Devil do ye na march ?  
 Stand to your arms, my lads,  
 Fight in good order.

A second noticeable feature in our popular bellicose poetry is what you, my dear friend, would perhaps call its 'actuality'; its clear eye for the solid facts of life, its demand for the due purveyance of the 'sinews' of war, and its refusal to be roused up to fight 'or fobbed off in the way of reward' by such an 'airy nothing' as military glory. I have already remarked upon 'The Roast Beef of Old England;' that song lays down with much emphasis that it is roast beef, and roast beef alone, that is the chief cause of the Englishman's success in war; and it shows our national straightforwardness that we are not ashamed to wear before the nations the unimaginative sobriquet of John Bull. The Englishman is no less solicitous about the monetary value of his successes. He is not of those æsthetic weaklings who practise the art of war for the art's sake. The true British feeling was expressed by one of our Poets Laureate, Mr. Southey, in his justly popular poem about the Battle of Blenheim; which represents a sophisticated German peasant as in vain attempting to parry the voice of Truth and Nature in that demand *ex ore infantium et lactentium*—

‘But what good came of it at last?’

This practical spirit comes out clearly and strongly in the old ballads which stirred that typical Englishman, Sir Philip Sidney, 'like a trumpet.' Take 'Brave Lord Willoughby' for example, to which Byrd wrote a gorgeously romantic tune. There is, first of all, the clear statement of the numerical odds that an Englishman, relying on beef, always feels bound to face:

The fifteenth day of July,  
 With glistening spear and shield,  
 A famous fight in Flanders  
 Was foughten in the field;



The most conspicuous officers  
 Were English captains three,  
 But the bravest man in battle  
 Was brave Lord Willoughby.

The next was Captain Norris,  
 A valiant man was he :  
 The other, Captain Turner,  
 From field would never flee.  
 With fifteen hundred fighting men,  
 Alas ! there were no more,  
 They fought with forty thousand men  
 Upon the bloody shore.

Then there follows a clear, business-like statement of the work done ; and finally a statement every bit as precise of the remuneration received for it :

To the soldiers that were maimed  
 And wounded in the fray,  
 The queen allowed a pension  
 Of fifteen pence a day,  
 And from all costs and charges  
 She quit and set them free :  
 And this she did all for the sake  
 Of brave Lord Willoughby.

The same general features are to be found in the ballads of the other Service. An admirable specimen of these is the 'Honour of Bristol,' which sets forth 'how the *Angel Gabriel* of Bristol fought with three ships, who boarded as many times ; wherein we cleared our decks and killed five hundred of their men, and wounded many more and made them fly into Cales, when we lost but three men, to the Honour of the *Angel Gabriel* of Bristol.' One verse may be quoted. Notice especially the reasons given for the popularity of this particular vessel :

This lusty ship of Bristol  
 Sailed out adventurously  
 Against the foes of England,  
 Her strength with them to try :  
 Well victualled, rigged, and manned she was  
 With good provision still,  
 Which made men cry, 'To sea, to sea,  
 With the *Angel Gabriel* !'

Such, roughly, are the characteristics of English folk-songs, and here, I venture to think, is work for our poets. The literary classes have been of late even over-stimulated by patriotic poetry. But the deep heart of England is still unaffected. It knows of Kipling but as an American who has had influenza ; it has never

throbbed to 'Drake's drum' or shuddered at the 'Purple East.' Here, then, to change the figure, is virgin soil. And see how wide the field is—no less than the whole field of politics, imperial or local—*quidquid agunt homines*. There is no cause that cannot be killed or borne to victory by a song. In my part of the country, when the cry was raised for 'three acres and a cow,' our parliamentary members were hard put to it to face their village meetings. Expectation pictured them as about to arrive in patriarchal fashion urging along a herd of kine with the measuring rod that was to plan out the acres. But at most they came with two horses, and in their hand the manuscript roll of a speech, which, under the circumstances, it was often not easy to deliver. So they called in the Muses to aid. They revived that fine song of Dibdin's, the 'Miller's Daughter,' with its jaunty air, to make the project ridiculous, and they succeeded. Do you know the song?

There was a miller's daughter  
 Liv'd in a certain village,  
 Who made a mighty slaughter;  
 For I'd have you to know  
 Both friend and foe,  
 The clown and the beau  
 She always laid low :  
 And her portion, as I understand  
 Was three acres of land.  
 (Chorus)—*Three acres and a cow,*  
*A harrow and a plough,*  
*And other things for tillage ;*  
 What d'ye think of my miller's daughter ?

The emphasis with which the italicised line was always given (or, to put it more phonetically, 'three hacres and a keow') was mordant enough to kill any bill ever brought into Parliament. Now my argument is, that what could be done once can be done always, and that what the nation at this moment needs is a Tyrtæus of the Legislature. But he must not be a dilettante. Can anything be imagined, for instance, with less snap about it than Tennyson's attack on the House of Lords in 1852 ?

And you, my Lords, you make the people muse  
 For doubt if you be of our Barons' breed—  
 Were those your sires who fought at Lewes ?  
 Is this the manly strain of Runnymede ?

No, the reader replies, decidedly it isn't ; a poet of the people who is qualifying as a successor to the old Barons must not write so, nor must he rhyme *muse* with *Lewes*.

I have been casting about for any evidence that the County, District, and Parish Councils are alive to the mighty force that lies at their service in song. All that I have been able to discover is the following piece, which is descriptive rather than critical, and was possibly sung as a cantata at a village meeting, in the first exuberance of expectation at what Mr. Ritchie's Act would do for them. It has no poetical merit, but is interesting as a document of the days before the parish councils were patronised by the squires and parsons, and employed by them as a means of combining beneficence with economy; the expense of improvements which would in old days have come out of their own pockets being now divided among all the ratepayers.

*The Chairman of the Parish Meeting speaks :*

To all and sundry greeting :  
 Once more on Phoenix wing  
 Appears our Parish Meeting,  
 True harbinger of spring.  
 Choose fifteen good and true men,  
 As in past years you've done,  
 (Or, if it please you, women),  
 All over twenty-one.

In this ideal parish  
 I need not press on you,  
 Since criminals are rarish,  
 That such you must eschew.  
 Far hence must fly the feet of  
 The bankrupt and the thief,  
 And persons in receipt of  
 Parochial relief.

Else every nomination  
 I'm ready to receive ;  
 I'll put them in rotation,  
 And count the votes you give.  
 Unless some person (quoting  
*Sched. i.*) a poll demands,  
 The method of the voting  
 Will be by show of hands.

*An interval for the voting ; after which the Parish Council is constituted, and its Chairman speaks :*

Your Chairman I'm co-opted ;  
 The O'erseer is Clerk elect ;  
 What *Acts* shall be adopted <sup>1</sup>  
 Behoves you now reflect ;

<sup>1</sup> The so-called *Adoptive Acts* are the Lighting and Watching Act, Baths and Wash-houses Acts, Public Libraries Act, &c.

What ~~passion~~ sways th' elector,  
 What ~~fear~~ or what desire,  
 For ~~which~~ the irate Rector  
 We'll rate, and rate the Squire ?

Say, shall we light the village  
 With the electric ray ?  
 Though Parson call it pillage,  
 He ~~can't~~ refuse to pay !  
 Or shall we by fire-engines  
 Insure our roofs of thatch  
 From Vulcan's stealthy vengeance  
 And childhood's playful match ?

Or washing might be pleasant  
 When summer heats draw on ;  
 But Nature laves the peasant  
 With perspiration.  
 More useful to the toiler  
 A wash-house for his clothes,  
 Complete with patent boiler,  
 And mangle, tubs, and trows.

Or, should you care for reading,  
 Three farthings in the pound  
 Procures what light and leading  
 In libraries are found.  
 Hall Caine and Miss Corelli,  
 'Enquire Within' (for cooks),  
 The Laureate, and Shelley,  
 And Lubbock's hundred books.

Thus gayer than a circus  
 Our village life shall run,  
 With no fear of the work'us  
 To intrude and spoil the fun.  
 Our sun can hatch no viper,  
 No frost can mar our June,  
 Since others pay the piper  
 And we but call the tune.

*[They make a rate, then dance.]*

If you are fortunate enough to have met with more interesting examples of the local muse, I would beg you to communicate them to me ; in the meantime I subscribe myself,

Your sincere friend and well-wisher,

URBANUS, SYLVAN.

*LITTLE ANNA MARK.*<sup>1</sup>

BY S. R. CROCKETT.

## CHAPTER XX.

## ON THE TRAIL OF THE HUNTER.

Now I must go back to where I left Little Anna Mark. And full time too, for such a numbskull as I had proved myself hath occupied the tale long enough. I will relate what happened to her, for I have reason to know it as well as if it had happened to myself—or, in fact, fully better.

I left Anna, as all may remember, by the westerly gable of Umphray Spurway's house of New Milns when, in the evening sunshine, I rode away over the hills well enough conceited with myself, which is no unusual habit of mind in sixteen when it hath spent an hour or two in the company of an honest young lass.

Well, as I say, I left Anna standing under the flowering thorn which Umphray had fetched all the way from Yorkshire—why, no one exactly knew. It may be that one like it grew in his mother's garden on the edge of the wold, or, perhaps, once on a time he too had left a young maiden standing under the white May and smiling even as Anna had now smiled upon me.

Anna Mark stood a while looking after me under her hand, and I, for very pride of my horsemanship and the straightness of my back, did not turn round in the saddle. Then, since William Bowman was in Abercairn and Umphray himself not yet home, she went off to the ordering of domestic matters in the Miln House, and to see that the foremen weavers shut and barred all the doors properly, for in this matter Umphray Spurway trusted her wholly, as indeed well he might.

And while she was within doors the sun began to sink, and the coolness of evening to come up out of the ground. By-and-by Anna went out to the hillside pastures at the back to find Joey Forgan, the herd boy of the Miln, who ought to have had the cows home by that time. She was promising to herself what she would certainly do to Joey when she caught him. Walking with

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1899, by S. R. Crockett, in the United States of America.

the swing I knew so well, and whistling like a lintie, she sped swift and light over the bent. But all suddenly she saw that which made her stop stock still one moment and the next drop out of sight into a copse of tall broom.

The heather grows low down on the hills above Umphray's, those same purple hills I had ridden into half an hour before. The gorse and whin-bloom reach up the burn sides to meet it, and all about there is scattered a bewilderment of rocky knolls and great grey stones as big as cot houses. Anna Mark was turning the corner of one of these huge boulders when a couple of score of yards beneath her she saw two men speaking together like folk who have secrets to hide. One, the smaller and more thickly set, was Saul Mark, her own father. The other was a much taller, more commanding man, in a laced coat, which, though they stood in the shadow, glittered in the bright reflection from the western sky. It was of pale blue cloth, and the braiding was of no pattern which bespoke a soldier of the king. Saul Mark was standing with his hat off before the man in the blue coat and listening with an air of much respect. The latter appeared to be giving certain orders, for as he finished speaking, Anna saw her father salute, and presently mount the horse whose bridle-rein had been passed through his arm. He rode off as hard as he could go in the direction of the Tinkler's Slap, the nearest pass through the hills to the town of Abercain.

The tall swarthy man stood a while looking after him, and then turning abruptly on his heel he strode past the broom-bush in which Anna was hidden so closely that she could feel the ground shake with his heavy tread as he went.

Then it came into her head that Saul Mark, her father, had been ordered to ride after me for some purpose of immediate treachery. She remembered the look on her father's face as he had watched us across the little linn of Kirkconnel that very afternoon, and do what she would she could not get the sense of impending danger out of her mind.

Anna looked about for Joey and the New Milns kye. She could see the last of them passing in through the great gate and a couple of weavers standing on either side to make all fast so soon as they were safe. Then there came to the girl one of those quick impulses which, far more than ordered and reasonable resolves, rule and order women's conduct.

Anna resolved to follow her father through the hill-gap, to

find out for what purpose he had ridden off so hotly upon my trail, and who the tall man might be whose orders he had taken like a servitor standing in the presence of his master. All which indeed she achieved before the night was out, though not in the fashion she anticipated.

Now, with Anna to think was simultaneously to act, which circumstance made her so dangerous at fencing and the single-stick play. So it chanced that as Saul Mark rode northward by the Tinkler's Slap to intercept me, he had a long limber slip of a girl tracking like a sleuth-hound hard upon his trail. For the first part of her pursuit, it was not hard to keep her father in sight. He did not ride well, but rather with the seaman's roll and lack of both comfort and elegance in the saddle. Besides, the pass was difficult and enough even for a good horseman and in the daytime. What it was to Saul Mark in the grey deeps of the gloaming, only Saul himself knew, and so far he has kept his counsel. But to Anna all this was child's play. She had wandered on the hills with Muckle Saunders MacMillan, till she could run as lightfoot over the heather and morass as one of his scouring colliers. The moorland night was to her as the day, being, as I often cast up to her, eyed like a cat.

And so while Saul Mark was every moment gripping and slackening his beast's rein, and cursing under his breath each time it stumbled, Anna was watching every movement with eyes which could distinguish the twinkle of the wide silver earrings in his ears every time his beast plunged over a mossy boulder or wandered aside from the fairway of that perilous and breakneck path.

When at last Saul debouched upon me at the meeting of the hill-roads on the brae-face overlooking the twinkling lights of Abercairn, Anna was not a hundred yards in our rear. Yet such was the resolution of her heart that she did not betray herself either then or afterwards. Such a lass as little Anna Mark there was not in broad Scotland—no, nor ever will be. That heart of hers beat as steady and true between the instant jaws of danger as when she sat in Moreham kirk listening to the minister's sermon. And always, come stress or easement, the merry eyes of laughter or the grinning sockets of Death himself, her brain abode under her broad white brow as cool and unruffled as beneath some overhanging rock in the forest you may find in summer heats the caller water of some crystal well.



So it chanced that while Saul the father played me for one silly gull, gorging me with the bait of lies, which I swallowed greedy-tooth, hook and all, his daughter Anna played him for another, and from a safe distance kept us both under observation.

And had she been left to herself, there is little doubt but that she would have prevented all the evils which followed. But as ill chance would have it, not a score of yards from the entrance of the town, who should come across her but Will Bowman. He had been walking with his arm about a girl's waist, more for something to do than for any pleasure there might be in courting the not too impervious damsels of the town of Abercairn. But at the sight of little Anna with kilted coats linking it through the busy streets, Will dropped his companion's arm incontinent and took after her as hard as he could go. He thought it was likely that Anna had come over the hills with me to look for Umphray Spurway, and he knew that it would not make for peace that she should seek him where he was to be found at that moment—that is, to be plain, in the little house by the Vennel corner, where he sat sipping his glass and devouring my mother with his eyes.

So on the slanted shoulder of the girl as she went up the lighted street of Abercairn at a harvester's trot, fell the hand of Will Bowman.

'Anna,' he said, breathlessly, 'what in the world of sin are you doing so far from home? You that should be in your warm bed behind barred doors in the house of New Milns?'

She tried to escape from his restraint, but Will's hand was overstrong. She never could turn him about her little finger as she did with me—aye, and for the matter of that, with Umphray Spurway also.

'Let me go—let me go, Will Bowman!' she gasped. 'Do not hinder me. It is a matter of life and death. I am following Philip and my father.'

'Your father?' repeated Will after her, speaking like a man in a maze.

'Yes; let me go! Or, better still, come with me. They passed up this street a moment ago, and we will lose them if we are not quick!'

But it was not in Will Bowman's power on this occasion to be quick. Beauty scorned was upon him. The lady whose arm he had so unceremoniously dropped was a certain Tib Rorrison, who earned her daily bread in the fish trade of Abercairn. Now, why

fish-dealing should produce in women a certain rough readiness of wit and raspiness of tongue is not perfectly clear. But the fact could not be doubted while Tib was explaining to Will and little Anna what she thought of them.

'Ye menseless landward-bred hound!' she cried, shaking her red fist, solid as a quarter of beef, a bare inch under Will's nose, 'ken ye so little o' Isobel Rorrison that ye wad daur to mistryst her, to tak' up wi' a silly partan o' a bairn like this? And you, Mistress Babbyclouts, that thinks wi' thae winkin' een o' yours to tak' Tib Rorrison's lad frae her on the high street o' Aibercairn—for a bodle I wad tear the bonny face o' ye, till it is a' rig-an' furr like a new ploughed field. Aye, an' Tib wad do it too—were it not that skelpin' wad fit ye better, ye pennyworth o' whitey-brown thread tied in a wisp!

'Na, an' I'll no stand oot o' your road, Will Crack-tryst! And I'll no haud my impident tongue. What care I if a' the toon kens? What business had ye to speer me oot to walk to Lucky Bodden's booth wi' ye, and partake o' spiced gingerbread and fardin' saveloys, forbye the best o' tippenny ale? Aye, lasses, that did he, the deceivin' thief, an' he shallna leave thae plain-stanes he is standin' on till he has treated no only me, Tib Rorrison, but every ither honest lad and lass within hearin' o' the sound o' my voice!'

'That's richt, Tib! Gie him his kail through the reek!' chorussed the crowd, 'gar him scunner. Tear the e'en oot o' that wee besom that garred him lichtly you!'

'Faith wad I, gin it were me, the randy that she is!'

'Aye an' me!' 'A herd lass, nocht better!'

'If Tib has only spunk in her ava', she'll never stand the like o' that.'

Such were the interruptions, all obviously provocative, which reached the ear of the already sufficiently militant lady, Mistress Isobel Rorrison, as she squared her arms and strode up so close to Anna Mark that even in the dusky flare of the torches from the booths, Anna could see the red of her weather-beaten complexion, netted and marly like the reticulations on a bladder. A fire was beginning to burn in Anna's eye, and her hand stole down towards the dirk she carried in her satchel pocket. But Will noted the signs of coming trouble, and putting his hand into his pocket he drew out half a dozen silver coins and held them out to Tib.

'There,' he said, 'I will stand treat. This is my master's daughter, and she is seeking him ower late to be left on the street of Abercairn by hersel'. Tak' the siller, Tib, and bear nae malice. And the next time I come to Abercairn I swear ye shall hae Lucky Bodden's candy-stall, stool and a', gin ye like.'

Tib, though considerably mollified, would not at once give in, being in the presence of so many witnesses.

'Gie your dirty siller to wha ye like, Will Bowman,' she cried, changing her ground; 'when Tib Rorrison sets tryst wi' a lad, it's neither for the sake o' siller nor yet tippenny ale, I wad hae ye ken!'

Will, anxious to be out of the crowd, looked about for some one he knew. He espied the hostler from the King's Arms.

'Hey, Jock Pettigrew, ye are no sae prood as Tib. Here's five silver shillings, sterling money. Gang doon to Lucky's and treat every lad and lass that will follow ye, giein' Tib first choice o' the saveloys. Guid nicht, Tib! Eat your fill and dinna bear malice!'

And so, under cover of the cheering and back-clapping, Will and Anna escaped down the High Street of Abercairn.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

PROVOST GREGORY PARTAN.

BUT by this time it was too late. All trace of Saul Mark and his companion was gone completely. There only remained to visit the King's Arms to see if any had noticed in what direction I had departed. But though Will's horse was duly in stall, neither landlord nor hostler could be seen. And the King's Arms Close was bare as the palm of a man's hand.

And now what to do? Anna was crying by this time, the tears rolling unchecked down her face even as they passed the flaring resin torches of the booths which, like swallows' nests monstrous and foul, were plastered about the walls of the Great Kirk.

They would go to the little house on the Vennel. It was just possible I might have gone directly home. But even in that moment Anna rebelled against meeting my mother. So that the two women most concerned about my safety, my mother and my —comrade, would have nothing to say to each other. So Anna

Mark abode without, while Will Bowman bent his head to the lighted window, but could see nothing.

'Do you hear Philip's voice, Will?' whispered Anna from the dusk of a close across the narrow causeway.

'Nay,' said Will, bending yet closer, 'but I hear a man speak within!'

Little Anna Mark could guess who, and a scornful smile, which none could see, passed over her face.

'Umphray Spurway has come back!' whispered Will Bowman. 'I can hear his Yorkshire burr!'

'Knock on the door, Will, and let us tell him all!'

'He will break my head for leaving the horse, and Philip's, when he catches him, for bringing you hither!'

'Nay,' the answer came clear across the Vennel, 'what are broken heads at worst? And, besides, Philip cares nothing for me, or he would have gone straight home to his mother as I bade him.'

Will Bowman stalked boldly to the little door in the corner house which gives upon the quay beneath. He knocked, and after a long pause there ensued the soft gritting of iron on iron. Then came the rattle and jar of a door which has been opened upon the chain. Which was my mother's ordinary method, ever since the face of her husband had looked in upon her through the open window of the Yett Cottage in the wood of New Milns.

'I am William Bowman, servant to Master Spurway, of New Milns, madam,' Anna could hear Will saying in reply to a question from behind the chained door. 'I am anxious about your son Philip. He entered the town at dusk upon a horse, and hath not been seen since. I came to know if he had returned home.'

Then came to Anna the sound of heavy steps upon a flagged floor, the rasp and tinkle of a dropped chain, and the light about the door, instead of being a mere three-sided crack, became a broad oblong, till the whole space was again filled up by the giant figure of Umphray Spurway.

So sudden was the apparition, that though he had expected his master's presence, Will gave back a step. Umphray Spurway had a way when disturbed of boxing the ears of a servant who annoyed him, and that without examination or discussion—a habit which enabled him to preserve excellent discipline, but which sometimes led to momentary injustice. And Umphray Spurway's hand was no feather-bolster.

'What do you here, Will?' his voice rumbled across the narrow street. Anna's heart beat and she would have run to him, but for the knowledge that 'that woman' was peeping timidly past his shoulder.

Then Will went over the history of the day as it was known to him, Umphray standing glooming in the doorway with the warm and lighted house-kitchen behind him, and my mother's knitting dropped on the clean-swept hearth.

At every mention of my being lost, my mother uttered a little moan of apprehension. For since the Yett House terror sat night and day contiguous to her lips. At the third repetition Umphray Spurway turned him about swiftly.

'Mary,' he said, 'do not fear. I will bring the lad back to you if he be in this town!'

And he wheeled into the house again to get his broad unplumed hat.

'Shut the door, Mary, behind us,' he said; 'open it to none. And keep your heart up. This is but some boyish ploy of Philip's for which I will tan his ill-conditioned hide.'

'Nay, nay, not if you love me,' said my mother through the door; 'promise you will not, for my sake. It is all Philip's high spirit!'

'High devil's tricks,' Umphray growled. 'Such high spirits are best moderated with a rope's end! Bide within, Mary, and do as I bid you!'

Umphray had found his ordinary way with all men to serve him best with my mother also. For she loved masterful men (as indeed most women do), and naturally obeyed them.

So out into the mild star-sown clarity of the night Umphray Spurway came. And as soon as Anna heard the chain rattle back to its place behind the door of the little corner house in the Vennel, she ran lightly to Umphray and clasped him by the arm.

'Anna!' he cried in great astonishment, stopping at the edge of the quay, 'what, in heaven's name, do you in this place at such an hour?' And he turned the girl about with her face to a lighted window that he might see what was in her mind.

Then, in hasty broken sentences, the girl told him all the tale that has been told already—of my uncle John, of Saul Mark, of the bout at single-stick, and of the tracking of her father across the hill, finishing with her meeting with Will, and how the two of them had lost their quarry at the outer port of the town.

Umphray Spurway went on stroking his beard as he listened. The masts of the ships stood up black into the sky, a star greater or smaller sitting upon the top of each. The surface of the harbour swayed and dimpled, tremulous star-dust sown broadcast across it. Little Anna had never seen the like, and even in the turmoil of her spirit it came to her with a kind of shock that she was in another world, where her acquired cleverness of the woods and hillsides was of no use to her. The creaking of mast-tackle, the groaning of main-braces, a boatswain's piercing whistle, the clear notes of a ship's bell stricken somewhere out in the dark over the water—all were wonderful enough to the girl, and remained with her all her life, as impressions and circumstances, however trivial, are wont to do which coincide with some supreme moment.

Now it chanced, even as these three, Anna, Will, and Mr. Spurway, stood thus on the quay of Abercairn, and while Umphray rubbed his chin with his fingers, that a couple of men strolled down the fairway, if such the narrow path could be called which led between the gables of the seaward houses and the ranged barrels and cooper's staves upon the wharf.

One of these was large and portly of body, with an outline in the region of the stomach which obscured both the head and the tail lights of a ship anchored out in the bay. He wore a great hat tucked up with a silver buckle at the side, while a well-fed pursy face, twinkling eyes, and short thick legs that hardly passed each other in walking, informed all concerned that Provost Gregory Partan was seeing to the safety and prosperity of the town of which he was at once the ornament and chief ruler.

His companion on the right was of another mould; a lithe dark man, wearing a hat of foreign make pulled low over his eyes. And as he went, large silver rings, as wide as crown pieces, glinted in his ears. At sight of him Anna Mark grasped the arm of Umphray Spurway.

'Look—look!' she whispered, 'there is my father. Ask him where Philip is.'

The two men were walking arm in arm, and presently, stumbling over a cask, the Provost swerved a little to the left to avoid the piled confusion of the quay, and, as he did so, he noted Umphray Spurway standing by the corner of the street with his companions a little behind him in the dusk of the wall.

'A braw and balmy nicht,' he said, making his magisterial salutation, which was always considered to be of super-excellent

dignity. 'Ah! good Master Spurway, what gives us poor folk of Abercain the pleasure (and I may add honour) of your company? But I forgot—yes, yes, I have heard there is an attraction at the foot of the Vennel that robes us in a worthiness not our own. A dainty bit widow, Master Spurway, or, rather, when I think of it, scarcely a widow, but, if one may say so without offence, so much the more taking on that account!'

'Not even you, Provost Partan, can say such things without offence,' returned Umphray very gravely, while Anna shrank deeper into the dusk of a doorway, and Will Bowman spread his master's coat-tails abroad to shield the girl from her father's eyes.

'No offence, man; no offence at all!' replied the Provost amicably, 'surely we have kenned ane anither weel aneuch this score o' years that I may take the freedom o' a jest wi' you, Umphray, my friend?'

'I have been seeking a lad of the name of Philip Stansfield,' said Mr. Spurway, without continuing the subject; 'he was last seen in the company of your companion, Mr. Saul Mark. Perhaps he can give us some information as to the boy's present whereabouts!'

'My companion,' cried the Provost, scandalised; 'nae, nae companion o' mine. Saul Mark is just the supercargo o' a bit boatie that rins to Bordeaux wi' oor Abercain staples—thread, baith black, white, and whitey-broon, birk pirns to wind it on, and your ain manufacture o' braidclaith—whilk, gin I may say sae, has made us famous through a' the land o' France.'

'Of what ship is Saul Mark the supercargo?' asked Umphray.

The Provost tilted his broad hat a little to the side as he slowly and meditatively scratched his head.

'The name o' the boat?' he answered. 'Dod—I canna juist bring it to mind at this present moment.' (Here he glanced cautiously over his shoulder.) 'Ye see, there's the trip back frae Bordeaux, and though of coorse she comes in ballast, pavin' stanes an' gun-flints, there's whiles odd things get stowed awa—sic as ankers o' brandy, wee barrels o' the fine clairy wine, tobacco that will mak' the noblest sneeshan in the worl' (will ye try ma boxie? It's o' the best. Na, weel than!), and maybes a warp or twa o' Valenceens lace. A' hairmless eneuch, but no to be spoken aboot as loud as Maister Ebenezer preaches in the Muckle Kirk. Ye tak' me! I, Gregory Partan, am the chief magistrate o' this ceety, and as such a law-abidin' man. But—thae ill-set customs



duties are neither house-dues nor town-dues, nor yet for the common guid. They are nocht but a sendin' awa' o' guid siller oot o' the municipality. And I dinna haud wi' them ava!'

In this fashion, and at considerable length, the Provost expounded his theory of the several incidence of imperial and local taxation, to which Umphray Spurway listened impatiently enough.

'But, Provost,' he broke in as soon as opportunity allowed, 'this lad was seen to enter the town with Saul Mark, and we mean to find where he is concealed. In which we ask for your magisterial assistance. If he be on shipboard we must go there and recover him. Philip Stansfield is the heir to a large and important property, and is, indeed, a ward of the Master of Stair, the King's own Advocate himself.'

'Forbye,' said the Provost, coming over and pinching Mr. Spurway's arm jocosely, 'the only son o' his mither—and her a weedow—or the next thing to it!'

'The name of the man's ship, if you please, Provost!'

said Umphray in a curt tone. He was getting angry, and began to suspect that the Provost was merely putting him off.

The Provost shook his great head, removed his hat, and coolly wiped the brim meditatively with his cuff.

'Na, Maister Spurway, try as I wull, I canna call it to mind. My memory is no what it was. But I ken a better way o't. The man shall tell ye himsel'. Saul!'

(he put his hands to his mouth and made a trumpet of them), 'Saul Mark! come hither, man. Umphray Spurway has lost ane o' his bairns and wants to ken gin ye hae him in your tail pooch!'

But by this time Saul Mark had disappeared among the tumbled casks and cordage piled upon the quay. They could see nothing but the masts standing thick against the sky, and even the light of the stars was dimmed by clouds which began to bear up on the land wind.

'Saul!—Saul Mark!—come hither and speak with Master Spurway!'

The bass bull's thunder of the Provost's summons seemed to wake most of the sea-front. Doors opened and shut. There ensued a noise of men moving cautiously in dark places. Lanterns gleamed a moment and were gone. The sound of oars came up from the water, together with a muttered curse as somebody at the bottom of the rude stone steps fell inward into a boat with a clatter and a barked shin. The surface of the bay was stirred

into phosphorescence by the regular dip of oar-blades, and then dulled again, as little flurries and catspaws began to ripple the dark water into a thousand wavering diamond points. Then, passing through the masts with a sharp flick-flick of cordage, they sped away over the town of Abercairn towards the unseen hills where the sheep lay out among the heather.

'Na,' said the Provost, 'I'm dootfu', Saul's gane on. His time is unco precious, ye understan'! A supercargo in a Bordeaux ship has nae siny-cure. A richt honest lad, Saul—will render ye a reckoning to the value o' a bawbee. Meddles a wee over muckle wi' the cartes and the dice, says you. But that's neither here nor there when every penny o' the profit o' your venture is clinkit doon on the nail!'

'I must pursue my search alone then, Provost, if you cannot assist me,' broke in Umphray Spurway, for the notion that he was being played with to put off time was now almost a certainty.

'Hoot awa', cried the Provost, genially; 'the nicht's young yet. I warrant the young vaigabond is off to see the lasses. He will be turnin' oot some ragin' gallivantin' birkie like the daddie o' him. He will be hame at his mither's hearthstane by this time, I'se warrant. It's juist no possible that a muckle laddie like that can be lost in this decent, law-abidin', God-fearin' toon o' Abercairn, and that under the provostship o' Gregory Partan, merchant and shipowner there!'

'I can wait no longer. I bid you good night, sir,' cried Umphray Spurway, saluting the magistrate and moving on. So the three searchers left the provost of Abercairn standing on the quay with his hands behind his back. He watched them go, with his fingers netted in front of him and his thumbs running races after each other like a puppy chasing its tail. A curious light twinkled in his small shrewd eyes as they followed the three till the darkness swallowed them up.

'Aye, aye—umpha—aye, guid Maister Englishman,' he meditated, 'ye think yoursel' clever. But it will be mony a lang day and short nicht afore ye can discover your weedow's ae son in my auld lime-kiln. Faith, my daddie kenned what he was aboot when he contrived the bonny slidin' door that ye micht seek for a' your life an' no find, and then biggit a store-room to cover a' snugly. Dean o' Guild he was and a maister mason, though he never raise to be Provost like me! He intended the auld hole-in-the-wa' to be filled wi' Low Country lace, French brandy, and

whatever the King's officers might lay the duty on. But he kenned naething o' a bonnier traffic and a mair profitable. Gregory Partan, twa or three cargoes like the last and ye are a made man! Ye may retire and buy a landed estate. Then the King will gie ye a title for your vailable services to the guid toon. Sir Gregory Partan—Sir Gregory Partan! What think ye o' that?—Sir Gregory!

But though the hour was late and even the late change-houses and drinking-booths along the sea-front were disgorging their noisy occupants on the street, Provost Gregory still paced up and down among the cordage and barrel staves humming softly to himself:

*'Heard ye e'er o' the Bailie o' Mickleham's coo?  
Her face it was basont,<sup>1</sup> and black was her moo—  
For milk or for butter her match I ne'er knew,  
This basont-faced, ring-straitit sonny auld coo!'*

And as he hummed, the Provost's small and wary eye was turned every way in succession, and he cocked his ear at every sound. Presently the regular dip of oars came to him across the harbour. At the distance of a hundred yards from the land a light was waved three times horizontal-wise, and then after a pause once up and down. The Provost moved nearer to the steps and leaned against a stone post grooved and smooth with the friction of ships' hawsers. A muttered order made him incline his ear. He heard beneath him the grating sound of a boat's keel, an oath, and then the dull rumble of oars softly shipped and the scuffle of men fending off with the palms of their hands.

A head popped up cautiously over the quay edge. A mouth whistled the first line of the tune the Provost had just been humming to himself:

*'Heard ye e'er o' the Bailie o' Mickleham's coo?'*

The Provost from behind the stone pillar responded with a flute-like second line:

*'Her face it was basont, and black was her moo!'*

From where he stood the Provost of Abercainr could see the stern of the boat black against the softly heaving phosphorescence of the inner harbour. For an easterly wind had been filling the water with jelly-fish till the nearer deeps appeared to pulse with a softly silver light, now black as night, again soft and lawny like moonlight filtered through mist.

<sup>1</sup> 'Basont,' i.e. dappled with white.

The men were scrambling out of the boat now, and ascending the steps one after the other. The Provost moved nearer the verge. The owner of the black head which had emitted the whistle projected his whole body above the stone parapet.

'Is all safe?' he whispered, as he erected himself.

'It is,' answered the Provost.

'Where is the Englishman now?'

The Provost silently indicated the direction in which Umphray Spurway had taken his departure. The door of a change-house in Ship Row opened. A broad beam of light crossed the quay and momentarily illuminated the group of dark heads and the massive form of the Provost. The heads of the new-comers were mostly tied up in coloured handkerchiefs, and in the ears of the whistler twinkled softly a pair of large silver rings.

'Will he have the bulk of the money on him, think you?' whispered the ringleader.

'God forbid that I should ken ocht aboot that,' said the Provost quickly; 'I hae neither airt nor pairt in your unholy ploys. Business is business, but Gregory Partan is nae highway robber.'

This he said indignantly. Then he paused a moment and added in a thoughtful, musing tone as if to himself:

'But yet I seena where he could hae left it. He has been in nae hoose in Abercain except that o' Mistress Stansfield in the Vennel, and it's no like that he wad trust sic a great sum to a woman! Na, he will cairry it aboot wi' him. Aye, aye, umpha—it's mair nor likely!'

'Thank you. We must be off,' said Saul Mark. 'Any orders, Provost?'

'When is "he" to be aboard?' asked the Provost, going a step nearer the supercargo.

'By twelve o' the clock at latest,' said Saul succinctly; 'we sail with the morning tide, full to the hatches with the bonny young two-legged cattle.'

'And a fine riddance it will be to the toon o' Abercain, forbye some siller in my pooch, gin the Lord gie ye success and a guid market on the ither side the water. But mind ye, keep within the law—keep within the law. And be preparit to render a strict accoont o' every head amang them, either in yellow guineas or the best Virginian tobacco. Are ye to tak' the boy on board wi' ye the night?'

'Aye, an' the lassie too, if we have luck?'

'What lassie?' the Provost turned quickly. 'I thoct that it was a strict rule that there should be naething o' that kind!'

Saul Mark laughed an ugly little laugh.

'Surely you have forgotten the heart of a parent, and you a man with a family! Provost, I mean my own daughter Anna.'

'God!' gasped the Provost, 'ye are never siccan a deevil incarnate as to sell your ain flesh and blood?'

'And what for no?' returned the supercargo; 'is it not done every day? Did not you yourself give your daughter Elspeth to the drunken lawyer Kirkup for gettin' ye the toon parks in lease perpetual?'

The Provost did not answer the taunt. He kept on muttering to himself and shaking his head.

'I canna allow that—I wanna hae that on a ship o' mine. A risk in the way o' business or the blinkin' o' an e'e for a certain profit, I will tak' wi' ony man. I will gang as far as it is in mortal man to gang—accordin' to my conscience that is. But to sell ane's flesh and blood——'

"Apprentice" is the word, Provost,' said Saul Mark, smiling; 'but you hinder us. Rest assured the girl is safe with me. We will find her very useful after she is snugly settled. I will put her into good training on the other side. Besides, you know, she will be near her mother. And in the meantime she will serve to civilise us aboard the *Corramantee*. God knows we need it.'

'And what will "he" say to a woman on board?' Saul Mark chuckled as he replied.

"He," as you call him, is a fury and all of a fine captain. But—well, Saul Mark is supercargo of the *Corramantee*, and the entire cargo is his business. Bear that in mind, Provost! Now, lads, bend your stiff shellbacks. On hands and knees till we are clear of these accursed lights! Good night to you, Provost.'

And, like the links of a great serpent, one pair of bowed shoulders after another passed Gregory Partan as he stood there leaning on the grooved stone pillar, till full twenty men had gone by; and, save for the scraping of cutlass sheaths against the piled barrels and the gleam of a distant light dimly reflected on a pistol-butt, there was nothing to tell that a score of the most desperate ruffians in the world were abroad in the streets of Abercairn.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE SUPERCARGO OF THE 'CORRAMANTEE.'

In the narrowest part of the alley which wound its way past the gable of Gregory Partan's property, Umphray Spurway was groping with his lantern in his hand. A noisome place it was in the daytime, gloomy even in mid June, with its slanted bars of light and its deep shadows, where low and villanously browed doorways opened off into the unknown. At night it became a mere pit of darkness, avoided by man and dreamed of as a standing horror by women and children; for it was reputed haunted by crouching malignant fiends and nameless horrors among all the superstitious of Abercairn. Strange sounds came up out of its deep throat! Lights had been seen by scudding night-wanderers flickering far down it, like will-o'-the-wisps in the marshes.

But Umphray Spurway was not the man to be intimidated by bairnly dreads or old wives' tales. In the course of his search for me, he had obtained a lantern at the King's Arms by the simple process of going into the stable and lighting it with his tinder-box; and now, with a spare candle in his pocket, he was systematically searching every corner of the town of Abercairn to which by any chance I might have wandered.

As he passed up the High Street he kept close to the houses on one side, flashing his lantern this way and that as if he were sweeping the uneven causeway with a broom of light. On many unholy and unbeautiful things did that feeble illumination fall. But it was Anna Mark who obtained the first clue; for, like a roving free lance, the girl went peering and trying back from side to side of the narrow street, doubling and twisting as a scent-dog does on a mixed trail.

At the very entering in of Partan's Close she lifted a riding-switch of willow, or, as it is called in these parts, 'saugh wand.'

'See!' she cried, 'he has been here. This proves it. I cut this with my own gully knife on the banks of the Linn of Kirkconnel this very day at four o' the clock. See, there is where the gully slipped and nearly whanged my finger off.'

She handed the switch to Umphray Spurway, who examined it with much interest. Will Bowman also bent over it.

'It certainly looks as if you might be right,' said Umphray,

'but, after all, one cannot be certain. There are a thousand "saugh" bushes betwixt Abercairn and the Linn of Kirkconnel. And, besides, any knife may slip.'

'That is the wand I gave into Philip's fingers as he rode away, scolding him that he had spent overmuch time already, and warning him to ride like muirburn before a following wind.'

Anna Mark spoke positively. She was not a girl to have doubts when she made up her mind.

'Well,' said Umphray Spurway, 'beggars must not be choosers. It is a poor clue, but the only one we can find. Here goes to examine the Provost's Close. 'Ugh'—(he sniffed)—'the filthy pigs! These shore folk never clean anything till they have laired themselves to the eyes in muck!'

He took his way down the alley, thrusting his lantern out in front of him, and feeling the clammy sides with his unoccupied hand till he came to a locked door.

'Bide where you are, Anna,' he called back; 'and you, Will, look to her. It is fair wading here. What's that?'

'Help!' It was Will Bowman's voice.

'Father, let me go!' This time it was Anna's, but strangely muffled.

'Umphray Spurway, help! They are choking me!'

The great Englishman turned and drew his sword. He ran back along the narrow three-foot passage, thrusting his lantern before him, and, almost before he was aware, touched the black muzzles of half a dozen muskets which with one accord were pointed at his breast. But, nothing daunted, he lifted his sword, and would have driven on furiously into their midst.

'Stand there!—on your life—or we fire!'

It was Saul Mark who spoke. He stood behind those of his men whose guns held Umphray Spurway trapped in the narrow pen of the Provost's Close.

'Surrender, Umphray Spurway, or you are a dead man,' continued Saul Mark, 'and deliver up the money you carry in the pocket-book in your breast. Quick too; we have no time to waste!'

'I will surrender to no man!' cried Umphray. 'Will, cry the alarm. Knock upon the Provost's door!'

'Your "Will" is provided for. He will give us no more trouble!' retorted Saul Mark fiercely. 'Nor will you, Master Spurway, if you delay another minute.'



'Then I will cry the alarm myself!'

He lifted up his mighty voice so that it shook the sleeping town till the burgesses trembled in their beds.

'*Help there! Murder!—black murder!*'

'Front rank, make ready to fire. Scipio, cut the prisoners' throats if he shouts again. Now, Umphray Spurway, will you surrender, or will you die?'

The great Englishman was not yet conquered.

'For me,' he said, 'I would rather die than yield to any tallow-faced sea-swab alive. I will fight any man of you with any weapon you like to name.'

'Fighting for honour is not our business. Our business is to have your money, and get aboard. Now, I give you thirty seconds; and if you will not deliver it, by the Lord I will kill the lad and the girl before your eyes!'

'Mercy of God, man, she is your own daughter!'

'The more reason then that I should do what I like with my own. Now, you are wasting time. Will you give up the money and submit? Half a minute from now, Scipio. Count the seconds.'

A rich oleaginous voice in the background, with a sea swing in it like the overword of a chantey, began to count, 'One, one—one—one—one—— Two, two—two—two—two—— Three, three—three—three—three!' And so on through the numerals, each set of repetitions telling off a second as nearly as might be.

Umphray Spurway hung a moment in the wind, doubtful whether to make a rush for it. Instead, he elevated his lantern, and its light fell on Anna Mark, helpless in the arms of a gigantic black, whose great palm was pressed against the girl's mouth. It was this man who was counting the seconds in a monotonous sing-song, and swaying from side to side as he did so. Behind him Umphray caught a glimpse of a couple of dark-skinned ruffians stuffing a gag into Will Bowman's open mouth, while other two held him pinioned by either arm.

Umphray was a brave man, but he knew when to give in.

'Enough,' he said; 'I surrender!'

'Pass over the money then!' ordered Saul Mark shortly.

The Englishman took a shagreen pocket-book out of his coat, and slipped the leather strap over the levelled mouth of the nearest musket. The owner reached it back as a haymaker lifts hay on a fork. Saul Mark opened it briefly.

'Here, bos'n, the dark lantern! Let the glim fall on this!'

he said ; and, with quick and methodical accuracy, he checked the amount, nodding his head as he did so with a satisfied air.

'It is as well for you, Umphray Spurway,' he said as he buckled it up, 'that you have not tried to play with us. Now, right-about-face ! Put your hands behind you. Take three steps backward ! Halt ! Bos'n, tie the gentleman up !'

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### JACOB AND ESAU.

'WILL you let the boy and girl go ?' said Umphray, when he had obeyed, which he did without murmuring, knowing that with such desperate ruffians there was nothing else to be done.

'The girl is my daughter,' said Saul Mark ; 'you have too long separated parent and child. I am sure your warm and generous heart will take pleasure in having brought about so happy a reunion. I am infinitely obliged to you for your care of Anna. But now I will relieve you of your guardianship. Indeed, the girl wishes it herself, do you not, my daughter ?'

Anna struggled vehemently in the clutches of the black Colossus who held her, but only one muffled inaudible sound escaped from under the great palm.

'You hear ?' said Saul Mark, smiling, 'she cannot even express her joy.'

'You are a devil !' cried Umphray, indignantly. 'Listen—take my life and let the girl go !'

Saul Mark laughed aloud.

'That would be neither profitable nor yet a Christian act. It is true, you cannot go back to your mill till after you have remained a little while in a secluded spot. But we are not murderers. Besides, we want you to go and weave us more money than this paltry sum you have paid us on account. Do not imagine that this pays back the blood-money you owe for Dominie Ringrose's life. His death we will require at your hands and at those of this brave young man here, whose fame is so great in all the countryside.

He turned about to Will as he spoke.

'Ah, sirrah,' he said with a deep sneer, 'you are but an apprentice, but for all that you will pay. Oh, yes, you also will

help to settle the blood-debt. Blood for blood shall you pay. Drop for drop. Agony for agony, till every jot and tittle be redeemed.'

To all which, wisely enough, Will Bowman answered nothing. For the fellows who held him on either side threatened him with knives if he tried to speak. By this time they had tied up Umphray Spurway as he stood, with his back to Saul Mark and his men, in the opening of the Provost's Close.

'Now,' said Saul, 'it remains that so bold a seeker should be taught how to find.'

He passed Umphray by, and taking the lantern which had fallen to the ground, he followed the darksome passage to its end. Here he unlocked a door under an archway, the same by which some hours before I had descended to view the treasure of Sir Harry Morgan.

'Bring him along, three of you!' Saul cried back, 'the rest lie snug! Now, Umphray Spurway, bend your head if you wish your brains to remain in their case. Follow me along the passage, and at the end you shall find safe and sound that for which you have searched in vain all this night.'

It was at the same moment of time that I started up from the dusty floor of the deserted lime-kiln, a wild hope that I was to be delivered singing in my heart. I heard voices, footsteps, the tramp of men approaching. Fear and hope laid alternate hand on me. The low door, which I had not been able to find in the dark, showed itself plainly enough now, light darting from the keyhole and flashing all round the ill-fitting edges.<sup>1</sup>

The door opened. A tall broad-shouldered figure filled all the doorway. I was found—I was delivered.

'Umphray Spurway!' I cried and sprang towards him.

'My poor boy,' he said, 'I can do nothing for you. I also am a captive in cruel hands.'

'What!' I cried; 'you a prisoner?' For I had deemed such a thing impossible.

Then appeared Saul Mark carrying the lantern and three other men behind him, whom I had never seen, all with weapons in their hands. I could now see the Englishman's wrists tied behind him.

'Now, Master Philip,' began Saul Mark, 'I promised you that

<sup>1</sup> I found afterwards, that the reason I could not discover this door in the dark was that the inner side of it, that towards me, had been purposely faced with lime, roughened on the surface and made to adhere firmly with plasterer's hair.

you should see Sir Harry Morgan's treasure. It was necessary to try your courage first. Now, since that is proven, I shall keep my word. Harry Morgan's treasure you shall see, and that in the best of company. Moreover, you shall have a chance to gain some of it in the same way he did—or thereabouts. You are going seafaring, Philip, my lad, and I fear me your kit is something of the shortest. But this your benefactor will supply. Put your hand into his pocket and see what you find.'

'I will never rob Mr. Spurway!' I said, blinking as boldly as I could at the man with the silver rings in his ears. He was still smiling the little contemptuous smile which I hated so.

'What do you say to that, Master Spurway?' As he spoke he turned to the Englishman.

'Philip,' said Umphray, kindly, not answering directly but speaking to me, 'do as you are bid. Put your hand into my pocket and take what you find there. It is all yours.'

'I thought so,' cried Saul, with simulated generosity; 'I knew it—spoken like a generous Yorkshireman! You are going to a far country, lad. You will need all you can get to make a figure there. So do not spare to take advantage of this your benefactor's kindness.'

Then, seeing that it was useless to do otherwise, and since he himself bade me, I put my hand reluctantly enough into Mr. Spurway's pockets one by one, and drew out from his coat-tails a snuff-box of gold set with pearls and a silk kerchief of fine material. Out of the other came a little red-bound Prayer Book; which struck me as strange, for Umphray was never known to be pious, or even so much as to cross a kirk door.

'I will relieve you of that snuff-box, Philip,' said Saul Mark; 'it is a habit most foul, and one that growing boys will do well not to acquire.' And he held out his hand for the box.

For a moment I hesitated, and the next Saul's voice changed from suavity into a perfect gust of ferocity.

'Ship's manners!' he cried. 'Learn to obey! Not at once, but a long mile ahead of that. After you have been a month on the *Corramantee* with the captain on board, you will learn to obey before, not after, you are spoken to!'

Startled almost out of my judgment, I handed him the box.

'Now proceed with your inventory, and make haste! I cannot keep my lads here all night waiting on your fumbling!'

Then I took from my friend's breeches pocket his tobacco-pipe in its silver case. The stem unscrewed into two pieces, and the bowl was larger than common. After that came his tobacco-box and tinder. These also Saul Mark took from me on the same pretext, and handed to the seamen behind him. I never saw them again. Mr. Spurway's keys he permitted me to put back into his pocket, saying that as he was to return to the mill-house and weave more money for them he had better have no more difficulties than were necessary put in his way. Next came his purse, which the supercargo bade me put in my own pocket 'for the present.' Then I was commanded to search the pockets in his waistcoat, to take the watch and seals out of his fob, and to put my hand into his breast, from which, though I knew it not, he had himself already taken out the pocket-book. As I did this last I felt something small and oval hidden deep within, and each time my hand passed across it I could feel him wince. So I judged that Umphray desired, above all the rest, to retain the article, whatever it might be. So of course I passed it by.

So busy was I at this work that I did not hear the sound of feet along the passage, nor any one ascending the steps which led into my dungeon.

'What is this?' said a voice that sounded in my ears like the trump of doom; 'ungrateful young tiger-cat, is he robbing his benefactor, his foster-parent? We must teach him better manners on the *Corramantee*!'

I turned me about, and there, taller than any other by a head (except Umphray Spurway alone), stood my father, Philip Stansfield, the condemned parricide, the almost assassin of my mother.

He was dressed in a handsome gold-laced coat, with epaulets upon his shoulders, and a cocked hat on his head like that worn by high officers of His Majesty's Navy. As ever, he was a man of handsome figure, and carried himself proudly and masterfully.

As he entered Saul Mark stood back, and I could see the sailormen shake with fear. Philip Stansfield strode over to where I stood speechless beside Umphray Spurway.

'A lantern here!' he cried. And when Saul Mark obediently brought it, he put his hand under my chin more gently than I had expected, and fell to perusing my face as though it had been a printed book.

'Humph!' he said shortly after a pause, and then turned away.

'And now, brave Master Spurway,' he went on in another tone, 'I hear you have set yourself up on my property as a power in the land. What hinders that I should not stick a knife into you and have you flung over the quay? You hunted me with dogs, did you? You brought the evidence to condemn me to the gallows, did you? Have you gone through him, men? What! my gallant son has already lifted the loot. Well, I am not proud; I will see if there are any leavings.'

And with that he strode to where Umphray stood, very grave and quiet, his arms strained behind his back, and began to pass his fingers across his person, seeking for anything that he might have concealed. I could see the Englishman's face wince every time Philip Stansfield's hand went near his breast, where I had felt the little hard oval thing.

The searcher noted the involuntary movement, and thrust his hand into the inner pocket of his waistcoat, from which he brought out a little miniature on ivory, handsomely set with diamonds. I was standing a little behind, and as Philip Stansfield held it underneath the rays of the lantern I could see it quite plainly within a yard of my eyes.

It was a portrait of my mother!

At this unexpected climax my father laughed a curious laugh. I never heard but one thing like it in all the world of sound. That was the low growling rumble of boulders grinding against each other in the bed of a flooded river. It was not a loud noise, but there was certainly something appalling about it.

'So,' said my father, turning to Umphray Spurway, 'it is as I thought, Master Jacob the Supplanter. You have been amusing yourself with Esau's wife, have you? And that when the poor man was abroad in the desert. Well, Esau has come home again. What have you to say to him?'

'I have nothing to say to you, Philip Stansfield,' said Umphray very calmly, 'save that I cherish for the unfortunate lady who once was your wife a feeling such as your nature could never understand. The picture you hold in your hand I had made privately. She knows nothing of it.'

'That will do,' said my father shortly. 'I need neither instruction nor information from you. What is between us I can

settle for myself. Here, supercargo, take my son and the other prisoners aboard the *Corramantee* immediately!’ He turned upon Umphray Spurway. ‘And now, sir,’ he said, ‘be good enough to observe the manifold conveniences of this kiln as an eligible permanent residence. Here’ (he pulled away a loose board by a ring) ‘is a quiet resting-place—deep, you see, and quite unoccupied. There’ (pointing to a whitish-grey heap in the corner) ‘is abundance of quicklime, waiting only a can of water to do its duty. I have a knife here, sharp enough to settle all scores with Master Jacob. In the meantime I am a feeling-hearted man. Take your charming miniature to the place you are going to. I do not desire to possess such a constant reminder of past felicity.’

He thrust the miniature back into the pocket where he had found it. Umphray stood silent, eyeing his enemy as calmly as though he had been striking a bargain with him in the market-place.

‘Bring the boy this way!’ said Saul Mark. One of the sailors seized me by the collar and gave me into the grasp of the supercargo.

‘Now listen,’ he said. ‘If, as you pass through the streets, you speak above a whisper, my orders are to throttle you!’ And, as a warning, he tightened his fingers on my throat till I gasped for breath. The last I saw of the terrible limekiln behind Provost Gregory Partan’s house was my father setting down the lantern on the edge of the yawning grave, in which he designed to place the body of my benefactor, Umphray Spurway.

(To be continued.)



